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Corporation: WIC managers were not arrested. PAGE 2
'Japan travelers remain fascinated with Saipanda.' PAGE 3

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Press secretary Angel A. Demapan opens the door to the governor's conference room on Capital Hill shortly after Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider wrapped up a Cabinet meeting yesterday morning. Now that he is governor, Inos reiterated his support for the inclusion of the CNMI in the national Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that will allow for more food stamp benefits to Commonwealth beneficiaries and pump additional $12 million to $24 million into the local economy.

Additional $12M to $24M into local economy

» CNMI a step closer to national food stamp program inclusion with Inos support

» Kilili: It's 'regrettable' $750,000 not spent on food in FY 2012

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Now that he is in a higher post, Gov. Eloy S. Inos reiterated his support for Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's (Ind-MP) initiative to include the CNMI in the national Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that former governor Benigno R. Fitial strongly opposed for years despite studies showing that SNAP will add $12 million to $24 million into the local economy compared to the current food stamp assistance block grant program.

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King seeks 2 Guam lawyers as co-counsel for Crisostomo

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

» Also requests for appointment of private investigator

Crisostomo

Admitting she lacks experience trying criminal cases, Superior Court-appointed counsel Janet H. King yesterday asked the court to appoint two Guam veteran lawyers as her co-counsel for habitual offender Joseph Acosta Crisostomo in the case of kidnapping and murder of bartender Emerita Romero.

At the same time, King requested the court to appoint criminal investigator Anthony Gomez in preparing for Crisostomo's trial.

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CHC to Legislature: Set aside $10M for us

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

» As governor extends CHC emergency declaration

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Juan N. Babauta asked the Legislature to appropriate some $10 million for CHC under the fiscal year 2014 budget, most of which will help subsidize the treatment of indigent patients. CHC,

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OPINION METER
This week's poll:
Who will be the 2013 NCAA Men's Basketball champion?
Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

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BUSINESS

Japanese manufacturers are more upbeat about business conditions than they were late last year.

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WORLD

Pope Francis marked Christianity's most joyous day with a passionate plea for world peace.

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LIFE & STYLE

After a nine-month delay, "G.I. Joe: Retaliation" deployed to the top spot at the box office.

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Local

Corporation: WIC managers were not arrested

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and officials of the CNMI Women's, Infants and Children program are crying foul over a "misleading and untruthful" news report that two WIC managers were arrested.

Corporation CEO Juan N. Babauta, in a press conference yesterday, clarified that there was no arrest made on WIC director Carmen C. Cabrera and manager Fabian Ulloa, the two officials falsely identified in the breaking news report published online Friday in the *Marianas Variety*.

In fact, he revealed that Cabrera, when the news broke out, was in the hospital recuperating from an illness, while Ulloa was on Rota.

As soon as the news went online, the CEO said phone calls were immediately made between Division of Public Health director Roxanne Diaz and the said employees. The two immediately paid a visit to Cabrera to clarify matters.

Babauta admitted that Cabrera, who is still in inpatient clinic at press time, was disturbed about the alarming "news."

According to Diaz, the "untruthful" article published online by the *Marianas Variety* damaged not only the reputation of the employees and their families, but had inflicted damage to the program itself.

The WIC program is a federally funded supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children up to 5 years old. Its source of funding is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service grant.

For FY 2013, from October 2012 through January 2013, records show that there were 348 pregnant women under the program; 242 are breastfeeding women; 216 are postpartum women; infants are 708; and children are 2,756.

Diaz yesterday apologized to Cabrera and Ulloa and to their families for the "damage" inflicted by the false report. She admitted that the incident has also raised concern from the federal granting agency. Today, Diaz is set for a conference call with U.S. Department of Agriculture to clarify about the incident.

"We're here to make sure that their names are cleared and we hope this never happen again to anyone," Diaz told reporters, adding that it is important that such sensitive issue be handled responsibly with enough data and confirmation from credible sources.

Yesterday, Ulloa admitted that he's receiving advice on actions to take against the false report, and is considering some options. Ulloa, the acting program administrator, has been serving the WIC program for five years now while Cabrera is on her second year.

WIC not under any federal, local probe

According to Assistant Attorney General Allen Hazlip yesterday, the NMI WIC is not under any investigation by either federal or local enforcement agencies. He admitted that there's ongoing monitoring on the program, but there been no indication that there is any formal probe on WIC.

Corporation CEO Babauta and public health director Diaz confirmed that the program has been constantly receiving complaints from vendors and participants. The latest was a complaint-letter from a particular vendor.

WIC quality assurance coordinator Ponce Rasa, meantime, said these complaints vary from anonymous tipsters to program participants and vendors.

Most of the complaints, he said, are information that WIC items were procured and were sold or traded to other stores. Rasa said they followed proper guidelines and protocol in ensuring that they validate information in all the complaints they received.

If there's evidence that vendor or participant engaged in fraud, among the consequences is the repayment agreement and disqualification from the WIC program.

Fabian said the WIC program has a total of 14 vendors: 10 on Saipan and two each from Rota and Tinian.

'Table Talk Tuesdays' continues today

"Table Talk Tuesdays" continues today, April 2, 2013, in the FamiliesFirst! Office; Committee on Education vice chair Sen. Aline A. Yamashita's office, in Tamuning.

The schedule is as follows:

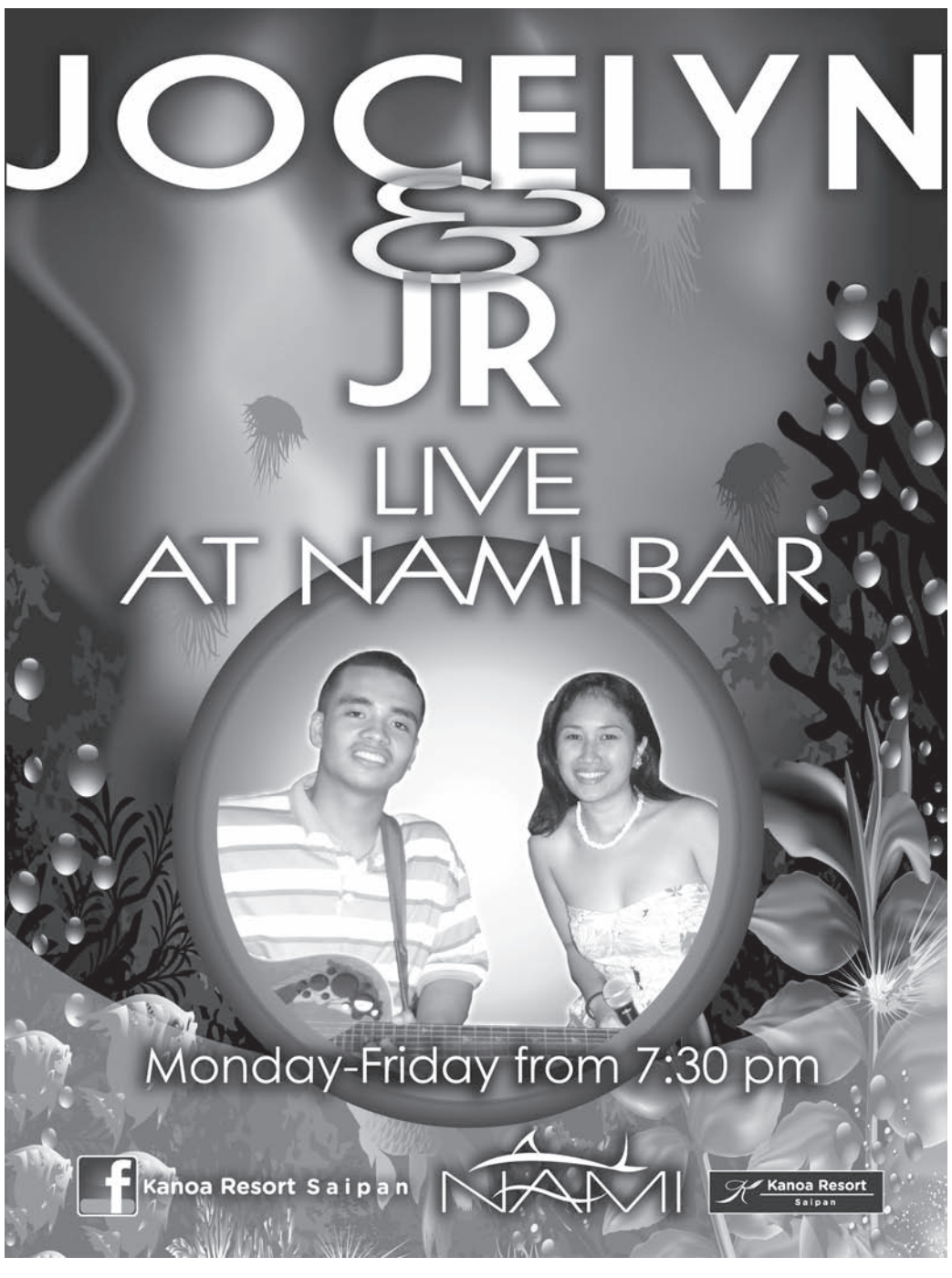
DOE
Date: Tuesday, April 2, 2013
Time: 8am-10am.
Venue: FamiliesFirst! Office, Sen. Yamashita's Tamuning Office

GCC
Date: Tuesday, April 2, 2013
Time: 10:30am-11:30am.
Venue: FamiliesFirst! Office, Sen. Yamashita's Tamuning Office

UOG
Date: Tuesday, Tuesday, April 2, 2013
Time: 12pm- 1pm
Venue: FamiliesFirst! Office, Sen. Yamashita's Tamuning Office

"Table Talk Tuesdays" fosters open, positive and ongoing communication between Guam's education institutions and island leaders to address schooling issues.

For more information, please contact the FamiliesFirst! Office at 648-3474 or email Sen. Yamashita directly at aline-4families@gmail.com. ***(PR)***



Delta Air Lines sponsors Flame Tree Festival

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Delta Air Lines representatives pose with Flame Tree Festival Committee members during the presentation of the airline company's donation.

The Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture, through the 32nd Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival Committee, is delighted to have the support of Delta Air Lines for this year's event.

The airline company has donated two round-trip tickets to any Delta U.S. destination. With this donation, Delta Air Lines is considered an "Exclusive" sponsor, the highest level of sponsorship awarded to companies, organizations or individuals that provide monetary or in-kind donation worth $10,000 or more.

"Delta Air Lines is an annual supporter of the Flame Tree Arts Festival," said sales and marketing representative Christopher A. Concepcion. "We're pleased to be able to continue our support for the arts in the CNMI. We wish the organizers a very successful event."

The 32nd Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival is scheduled from April 19 to 21 at the Civic Center Park in Susupe. Council Executive Director Angel S. Hocog says the donation from Delta Air Lines will be the grand prize for the raffle draw that will be held on the last day of the festival on April 21.

"We couldn't be more appreciative to Delta Air Lines which has been a staunch partner of the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture in making our largest and signature annual event possible," said Hocog.

"The preservation, promotion, and perpetuation of our culture through the arts becomes more significant because the council continues to make great effort in seeking and sustaining valued partners that support the Council and our local artists," he added.

Hocog invites local artists to exhibit their artwork by signing up for a booth at the festival at a minimal fee of $50 for registered artists and $150 for non-registered artists. "Only about a dozen booths remain available on a first-come-first-served basis so we encourage all interested artists to reserve their booth before it runs out," he said. Hocog also reminds the booths that Logistics and Enforcement Committee will roam the festival grounds to ensure that all artwork for sale are crafted on island.

To become a sponsor or for more information, visit the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture in Capital Hill next to the post office or call 322-9982 or 83. ***(PR)***

Bereaved Families Support Group meeting on April 4

A group that is in the process of forming a Compassionate Friends chapter in Saipan will be holding their monthly grief support meeting on Thursday, April 4, from 6pm to 7:30 pm in the NMPASI conference room on Middle Road in Gualo Rai.

We offer understanding and hope to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents who are grieving the loss of a child of any age, and from any cause. We provide a safe, confidential setting, in which to share our experiences, while respecting and supporting each other, and listening. We have "been there." We do not espouse any specific religious or philosophical ideology. There is no "right way" to grieve, and family members are welcome to come to share or just to listen.

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others to be supportive. Today more than 600 chapters serving all 50 states plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and Guam offer friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents and other family members during the natural grieving process after a child has died.

For more information, call Jill Derickson at 287-5337 or e-mail jilld@pticom.com. To learn more about The Compassionate Friends, visit their website at www.compassionatefriends.org. ***(PR)***

‘Japan travelers remain fascinated with Saipanda’

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Marketing expert for Japan Michael Merner disclosed that Japanese traveling to the Commonwealth remain fascinated with Saipanda, proof that the promotional character for the CNMI is still effective in enticing Japanese tourists to the islands.

Merner revealed this during last week’s membership meeting of the Marianas Visitors Authority where he keynoted the event and presented market updates on various destinations. Merner is the chairman of the AVIAREPS Marketing Garden.

Before members of mostly private partners and lawmakers, Merner revealed that ‘Saipanda’ is not being used as promotional tool in other markets such as Korea and China, but exclusively for Japan travelers.

Merner’s defense on the Saipanda character came after criticism against the fictional character and recommendations to change the promotional item for Saipan came to light.

MVA officials, in numerous occasions, have spoken about the symbol as being effective and proven most successful campaign in many years. Thus, the agency has no plan at this time to create a replacement for the character.

MVA in previous years has conducted a survey of its Saipanda campaign which results indicated that only a small percentage of Japanese respondents were aware of the existence of the campaign. Some sectors also criticized MVA for using the animal as a marketing tool for the Commonwealth, arguing that there are no pandas on Saipan.

Saipan Tribune learned that it was in 1998 when MVA started using the mascot for its promotional campaigns and it actually bagged a gold award from the Pacific Asia Travel Association for creating and re-branding the CNMI in the Japanese market and elsewhere with its Saipanda campaign.

Saipanda, it was learned, was born when the Marianas badly needed a signature mark for its islands. Saipanda, for many, brings easy recall for the island.

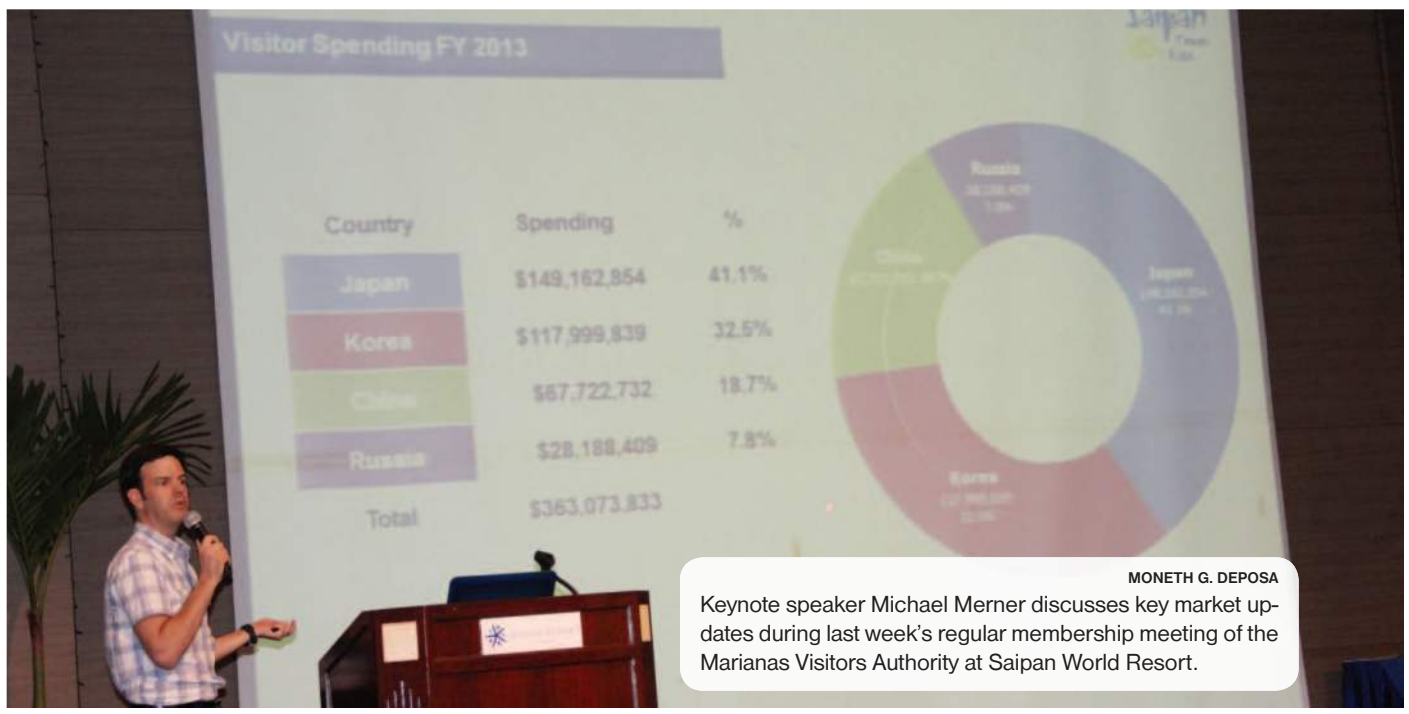
Besides the continued use of Saipanda mascot for the Japan market, Merner said that MVA-Japan also worked closely with key travel trade partners to educate and encourage them to produce and sell a greater variety of tour products to the CNMI.

They also organized and attended seminars and workshops throughout Japan to educate travel agents nationwide and to strengthen MVA’s partnership with CNMI partners, airlines, and major travel agents.

MVA Japan also sent out monthly newsletters, delivering the latest tourism information from the CNMI to over 2,000 travel trade representatives throughout Japan, including travel trade media.

According to Merner, the CNMI has a good mixture of tourism markets but he admitted that Japan remains on top of these destinations.

This FY 2013, MVA projected arrivals from Japan to reach 60,047, or 35.1 percent of the expected 456,417 arrivals this fiscal year. Korea is forecast to bring 34 percent of the arrivals with 156,004; China with 20 percent at 91,800; and the rest are from other markets.



MONETH G. DEPOSA
Keynote speaker Michael Merner discusses key market updates during last week’s regular membership meeting of the Marianas Visitors Authority at Saipan World Resort.

Down to 2 bidders in Marpi landfill contract

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The Inos administration is moving on with the procurement process for the Marpi landfill operations, with two top bidders asked to submit their “best and final offer” yesterday.

» But ‘emergency’ contract extended anew

Acting Department of Public Works Secretary Martin Sablan, in an interview with reporters after a Cabinet meeting on Capital Hill yesterday, said current emergency contract SARS/Success International Corp. and Tang’s Corp. are the top bidders out of five original proposers.

Sablan, who is waiting for his Senate confirmation, said a team will review these proposals and select the winner.

In the meantime, while the procurement process is still ongoing, Sablan said DPW had to renew for another 30 days or up to April 30 SARS’ “emergency” contract for the Marpi landfill’s equipment rental.

Rep. Ray Tebuteb (IR-Saipan) separately said yesterday that a three-year contract to operate the landfill would be better than one year or two years, adding that he hopes the best bidder will bag the multimillion-dollar contract.

“There are concerns raised like incorporating plasma gasification or waste-to-energy but that will still take time. There is an urgency to address the dump issues because from what we’ve learned, the Marpi landfill is filling up at a faster rate than it should,” Tebuteb told *Saipan Tribune*.

The three other companies that submitted proposals to DPW for the Marpi landfill contract were RMIC, JG Sablan, and GPPC.

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Guam governor says North Korea attack unlikely

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—People in the U.S. territory of Guam should not be distracted by threats from North Korea to launch a nuclear strike, Gov. Eddie Baza Calvo said.

Calvo said at a news conference Wednesday in Guam that an attack is unlikely and the region is adequately protected.

"It does bring some concerns, but with those concerns also you have to temper those concerns now with the history of North Korea, both the statements that its leadership has made in the past as well as the limitations that they have in their military forces," he said.

Calvo also said he spoke Wednesday with Rear Adm. Tilghman Payne, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Marianas, and is maintaining close communications with Payne and the Pentagon.

The Defense Department cannot detail military operations, plans or intelligence, Calvo said. But he said the country is ready to defend Guam and other U.S. territories, as well as its allies.

North Korea's military threatened South Korea and the United States on Tuesday, warning that its artillery and rocket forces are at their highest-level combat posture.

The North Korean army's Supreme Command said it will take "practical military action" to protect national sovereignty and its leadership in response to what it called U.S. and South Korean plots to attack. The statement was carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

North Korea's field artillery forces include strategic rocket and long-range artillery units that are "assigned to strike bases of the U.S. imperialist aggressor troops in the U.S. mainland and on Hawaii and Guam and other operational zones in the Pacific as well as all the enemy targets in South Korea and its vicinity," according to the statement.

A Pentagon spokesman responded by saying the threat would only further isolate North Korea.

North Korea is angry over routine U.S.-South Korea military drills and recent U.N. sanctions punishing it for its Feb. 12 nuclear test.

Lawmakers vote for safer schools, support mileage for student travel

HAGÅTÑA, Guam—Campus security at Guam schools and the travel ability of students will soon improve if Gov. Eddie B. Calvo signs off on a couple of measures passed during session yesterday.

Speaker Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D., chairperson of the committee on education introduced Bill 1-32(LS) and Bill 44-32(COR).

Bill 1 will aid in deterring criminal activity at island schools by providing a funding mechanism to procure the installation, and maintenance of electronic security systems for public schools in Guam.

"The horrible actions of criminals who break-into, deface, or otherwise steal from our schools affect the education of thousands of Guam's children, are extremely costly and disrupt instructional time to no end. We must do what is necessary to protect our schools and schoolchildren," stated Speaker Won Pat. "The use of surveillance systems at the campuses will not only deter crime, it will help in the prosecutorial process of these perpetrators."

Bill 44 allows students to travel using government earned airline off-island student travel involving academic, sports and cultural activities. The banking of airline miles earned government-wide has already helped many families in the form of travel assistance for medical referrals.

Bill 44 expands this program by capturing the airline miles accrued through the use of government credit cards in all agencies, including autonomous agencies of the government of Guam.

"The new benefit will level the ability of all students in every demographic to attend off-island activities based on merit and opportunity rather than a family's financial capacity," explained Speaker Won Pat. "I'm excited about this prospect, students can continue to excel in their respective studies and know that if an opportunity arises for travel he or she will not be limited by financial means."

Bill 1-32(LS) was also sponsored by Sen. Tina Rose Muna Barnes. Sen. Aline A. Yamashita, Ph.D., vice speaker B.J. Cruz, and Sen. Rory J. Respicio joined Speaker Won Pat in sponsoring Bill 44-32(COR). ***(PR)***

CHC

From Page 1

meanwhile, estimates that it can generate revenue of $35 million to $36 million with all the improvements at the corporation.

CHC's three-hour presentation before lawmakers that ended at 5pm yesterday on Capital Hill came a day after Gov. Eloy S. Inos extended anew the state of emergency declaration for CHC.

The emergency declaration since March 2012 allows for reprogramming of funds to CHC and suspends other statutory or regulatory provisions relating to the corporation.

Last year, CHC asked the Legislature for a $10 million appropriation. But Babauta and CHC's Esther Muna said lawmakers gave the corporation only $1.9 million.

"The uncompensated care is one that I think the Legislature has an obligation to fund CHC for," Babauta told *Saipan Tribune.*

The governor has yet to submit his $114 million budget package to the Legislature.

Babauta and most of CHC's division and unit managers made individual presentations before Senate and House members, updating them on the state of health and medical programs.

Lawmakers then took turns asking questions from CHC officials. Many of them raised concerns, while others acknowledged that CHC has made improvements.

House Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero (IR-Saipan), during the joint meeting, asked that CHC look into the practices of its physicians and staff when it comes to attending to their patients, citing the death of a 27-year-old man whom he said could have been saved had he been referred for medical treatment off-island sooner rather than later.He asked that doctors and other staff be held accountable for their actions, something that CHC officials assured of.

"Initially, a Dr. Brown told the family that a decision will be made on April 1 whether to send him to the Philippines or not. But the family, seeing that the patient is already in deteriorating state, jaundiced, appealed and talked to the Medical Referral Office. The patient was then flown to the Philippines. The first thing they did there is to remove fluid from his lungs which could have been detected here long time ago. And for the record, he was buried on April 1, the date when the doctor had said a decision will be made," Deleon Guerrero said.

Deleon Guerrero and Rep. Roman Benavente (IR-Saipan) also asked CHC officials to look into the way CHC personnel treat or communicate with patients and their families. Lawmakers said some are "rude" and disrespectful.

CHC's Babauta and other corporation officials assured lawmakers that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they will find ways to correct or improve hospital staff's bedside manners.

KING

From Page 1

As of press time yesterday, Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho has not yet issued any order granting or denying the two motions.

King said attorneys Jeffrey A. Moots and F. Randall Cunliffe, who both reside in Guam and active members of the CNMI Bar, have agreed to assist her if the court appoints them as her co-counsel.

Moots used to serve as chief prosecutor for the CNMI Office of the Attorney General's Criminal Division. He also previously worked as an assistant public defender in the CNMI.

Cunliffe has tried numerous felony criminal cases, including homicides, in the CNMI, Guam, and in Palau.

King said she feels that she does not possess the legal skill or knowledge to allow her to effectively represent Crisostomo without the assistance of more experienced co-counsel.

King said her lack of trial experience combined with her lack of experience in specific technical areas of possible evidence would result in counsel providing ineffective representation to Crisostomo in this very important matter.

"Counsel feels that co-counsel is justified under the facts of this particular case, e.g., the complexity of the issues, the other criminal acts alleged, the large number of witnesses, the complicated scientific and forensic testimony, and the extensive pretrial motions," she said.

The lawyer said it is her duty to her client to seek the appointment of experienced co-counsel to ensure that the defendant receives effective representation during the pendency of the proceedings against him.

King was appointed as counsel for Crisostomo due to the fact that the Office of the Public Defender and all other Saipan-based lawyers informed the court that they were prohibited from representing the defendant due to conflicts of interest.

King said Moots and Cunliffe are willing to assist her with the understanding that their law firm would be limited to maximum fees available for a single attorney for a felony case should they be appointed.

King said Moots and Cunliffe would request the court to allow them to bill to the court the cost of airfare to Saipan and back to Guam, and transportation costs, if they are appointed to assist her.

On her request for appointment of criminal investigator Gomez, the lawyer said an investigator is necessary to protect against disqualification of the court appointed attorney, should the adverse witness' testimony at trial contradict testimony during the investigation interview.

"I presently believe that an order allowing for an investigator at up to $50 an hour with a cap of $2,000 will suffice unless an application is made for more funds for the continued use of the investigator," King said.

The Office of the Attorney General charged the 39-year-old Crisostomo with first degree murder, kidnapping, sexual assault in the first degree, robbery, theft, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

Romero was reportedly kidnapped near her house in Garapan on Feb. 5, 2012. Two days later, FBI agents found her body at the abandoned La Fiesta Mall in As Matuis.

ECONOMY

From Page 1

Under SNAP, beneficiaries would get more in food stamp benefits compared to the current assistance block grant that the CNMI negotiates annually with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"Based on recent assessments on the implementation of SNAP in the CNMI, I agree that the possible influx of an additional $12 million to $24 million to the CNMI economy will prove beneficial in this time of dire economic challenges," Inos said in a March 28 letter to Sablan, a copy of which was released yesterday.

Sablan, at the same time, said yesterday it is "regrettable" that there's some $750,000 in food stamp benefits that were carried over from fiscal year 2012 into FY 2013 because it was not spent "to help people at a time when they need help the most."

The delegate said Inos' support "helps" in including the CNMI in the SNAP under a "farm" bill. The so-called farm legislation governs U.S. agriculture and nutritional assistance policy.

"The decision will have to be made in legislation and Governor Inos' support helps. I continue to work with Chairman Frank Lucas and Ranking Member Collin Petersen and committee staff as they themselves continue their work in the FARM Bill," the delegate said.

Inos, in his one-page letter, acknowledged Sablan's efforts to ensure the inclusion of a $33-million increase in food stamp funding for SNAP in the long-delayed farm bill.

The governor hopes that that U.S. House Agriculture Committee, under chairman Frank Lucas, will wholly support this legislation.

Sablan said until the CNMI gets the Farm bill enacted into law, Inos "could begin negotiation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service for the much more expanded block grant program conditions, even possibly including higher benefits for program beneficiaries on Rota and on Tinian."

To illustrate SNAP's advantage over the current food stamp program: An average monthly food stamp benefit for a family of four in the CNMI is $302 a month, based on a 2011 study by RAS Consulting.

In Guam, which is under SNAP, a family of four receives an average of $985 a month in food stamps. Nationally, the average monthly benefit for a family of four is $668.

Some food stamp recipients interviewed yesterday said anything that will help increase food stamp benefits will be of big help.

Sablan said he will continue to work with the U.S. House Agriculture Committee to again include in the farm bill language "transitioning the Northern Mariana Islands from a block grant into the SNAP program."

"Language in the FARMM Bill is what we need for SNAP to be a permanent fixture in the Northern Mariana Islands food assistance program," he said.

Increased funding, EBT

Inos also asked Sablan's assistance to ensure that such farm bill also include the funding that the CNMI needs to undertake the implementation of an Electronic Benefit Transfer system in the Commonwealth.

USDA earlier de-obligated $4.5 million in funding to the CNMI because it has failed for years to put in place an EBT system.

"Additionally, as we anticipate the inclusion of the Commonwealth in SNAP, I would also like to work closely with you in negotiations for increased funding under the existing NAP block grant until such time that we have fully transitioned to SNAP. I am certain that many families in need of this assistance will benefit and appreciate any additional help they can get to provide for their households," Inos told Sablan.

Under the previous Fitial administration, the CNMI's inclusion in SNAP was opposed because the CNMI would be required to share one-half of the administrative costs. Currently, these are entirely paid with federal grant funds.

The current administrative cost is about $1.3 million. This means if the CNMI is included in SNAP, it has to shoulder $650,000 of the administrative costs.

But RAS Consulting said in its study that the $650,000 would be more than covered by additional tax revenue of $2.148 million to $5.04 million generated by the increased food sales and other economic activity resulting from inclusion in SNAP. RAS Consulting also said inclusion in SNAP would also result in a total economic impact of $21.48 million to $42.96 million annually using the SNAP multiplier.

The federal-administered food stamp program has 3,518 total household members in the CNMI as of January 2013, which translates to 9,522 individual beneficiaries on Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Northern Islands. In 2012, the program was funded over $12 million.

Hearing on CPA emergency motion set at later time

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood will set a hearing at a later time for the Commonwealth Ports Authority's emergency motion to remand to the Superior Court the NMI Retirement Fund's lawsuit against the CNMI government.

In an order issued on Friday, Tydingco-Gatewood said the alleged reason for CPA's emergency motion is this federal court's hearing addressing Public Law 18-2 in another matter involving the Fund.

Tydingco-Gatewood said this is virtually the same issue CPA wants remanded to the Commonwealth courts.

"Because the court's decision on this issue will bind intervenor (CPA) regardless of when this case is remanded, the court will set the briefing schedule and hearing for this emergency motion at a later time," the judge said.

Public Law 18-2 compels the Fund to release up to 50 percent of members' contributions within 30 days of submitting a refund application.

Retiree Betty Johnson filed an emergency motion for clarification of the federal court's order dated Jan. 18, 2013 with respect to Public Law 18-2.

CPA recently filed a motion for writ of mandamus, asking the Superior Court to direct the Fund to comply with Public Law 17-82 that allows Fund members to withdraw the full amount of their contributions without separating from the government.

Because of CPA's motion for writ, the Fund then removed its 2006 lawsuit filed in Superior Court against the CNMI government and then transferred it to federal court.

The removal prompted CPA to file its emergency motion in federal court.

In the emergency motion, CPA legal counsel Robert T. Torres said the removal petition implicates no federal interest and ignores the important interest of the Commonwealth in enforcing its laws.

On remand to Superior Court, Torres said the CNMI court would mandate the Fund to enforce the judgment in favor of the Fund toward its satisfaction and further enforce Public Law 17-82 and Public Law 18-2 directing the withdrawals so that CPA's obligations would be reduced if not minimized.

Torres said following a flurry of failed efforts to disqualify every judge in the Commonwealth from ruling on Fund post-judgment motions in Superior Court, the Fund removed this matter to federal court as a last-ditch effort to prevent its having to return pension contributions to active government employees who choose to terminated their membership in the Fund.

Torres said the removal petition is improper for three reasons—untimely; there is no federal interest requiring access to a federal forum; and the matter does not involve the Fund trustee *ad litem*'s failure to perform duties required by the federal court.

"This effort to forum shop, find a suitable judge, and delay the return of pension contributions to the employees who entrusted them to a Fund that has the obligation to protect them is rifled with defects," Torres pointed out.

The Fund, through its trustee *ad litem* Joseph Razzano, has asked the federal court to deny what it called CPA's meritless motion for writ.

The Fund filed the lawsuit in Superior Court in 2006 against then Gov. Benigno Fitial, the CNMI government, and co-defendants over the government's failure to remit required payments to the Fund.

In 2009, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo ruled that the government owes the Fund $282 million in damages and that the law suspending government contributions to the Fund is unconstitutional.

Manglona to appoint conflict-free counsel for Sen. Ayuyu

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona yesterday informed Sen. Juan M. Ayuyu (Ind-Rota) that the court would appoint conflict free counsel for him in his criminal cases.

Manglona said as funds of Ayuyu become available, the court may direct such funds to pay appointed counsel and other services.

The judge ordered that Ayuyu's trial will be set at a later date.

Another status conference will be conducted today, Tuesday, at 9am.

At yesterday's status conference, Ayuyu appeared with limited term appointed-counsel, Vicente Salas. Assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe appeared for the U.S. government.

Ayuyu

Manglona relieved Salas from his limited term appointed-counsel regarding the issue of potential attorney conflict.

After the hearing, the senator was remanded into the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

Last week, Manglona vacated the April 1 jury trial of Ayuyu and issued a written order that disqualified attorney Joaquin Torres and the Torres Brothers law firm as counsel for Ayuyu.

According to court records, Senate President Ralph Torres (R-Saipan) is a potential witness of the U.S. government in Ayuyu's criminal cases. The Senate president is brother of Joaquin Torres, who is Ayuyu's counsel and a member of the Torres Brothers law firm.

Ayuyu is facing two criminal cases over an alleged conspiracy to smuggle eight dead Mariana fruit bats from Rota to Saipan in October 2010, concealing the bats inside a cardboard box beneath 40 lbs of lemons. A joint jury trial in the two cases was supposed to commence yesterday, April 1.

Recently, the U.S. government filed a third criminal case against Ayuyu for alleged possession of a cell phone while being detained last January at the Department of Corrections in Susupe.

Ayuyu, 48, has been in detention since Dec. 17, 2012. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

RI bank wants to transfer Arctic Circle lawsuit to federal court

Rhode Island-based Independence Bank wants to transfer to federal court from the Superior Court a lawsuit filed by Arctic Circle Air Co. against the bank.

Independence Bank, through counsel Rexford C. Kosack, filed yesterday in the U.S. District Court for the NMI a notice of removal.

Kosack said the basis for removal of the lawsuit is diversity between the parties.

Kosack said plaintiff Arctic Circle Air Co. is a citizen of the CNMI having been incorporated in the CNMI and having its principal business on Saipan.

The lawyer said defendant Independence Bank is a financial institution, incorporated pursuant to the laws of the State of Rhode Island, with its principal place of business in East Greenwich, Rhode Island.

Kosack added that another basis for removal is that the amount in controversy exceeds $75,000, exclusive of interest, costs, and attorney's fees.

Arctic Circle, a cargo and passengers airline, is suing Independence Bank over the bank's demand for payment of $155,000 in "break-up fees."

According to the complaint, Arctic Circle and Independence Bank agreed on a $600,000 interim loan in 2011.

In November 2012, Arctic Circle advised the bank that the company did not want the bank to pursue the loan. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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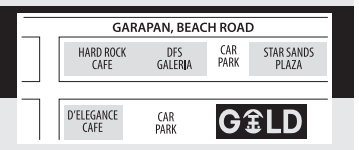

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FEDS APPROVE $250K FOR PSS STUDENTS

NMI students participation in nat'l competitions a go

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Public School System will continue to send students to various academic events this school year after the federal government approved $250,000 for that purpose, according to PSS programs officer Tim Thornburgh.

Thornburgh said he received the information during a recent trip to Washington, D.C.

In previous years, funding for students' competition was sourced from the regular consolidated grant received by PSS. This fiscal year, the federal government wants this item eliminated as a means to cut the national budget deficit.

Directly impacted by this mandate from the U.S. Department of Education, is the postponement of the We The People competition where the winner competes in the national event.

The same funding constraint also limited PSS this year in sending many students to off-island events such as the recent Chamorro Language competition in Guam, the Spelling Bee, and the Tumon Bay Music Festival.

Thornburgh said the $250,000 recently approved for students' competitions will be sourced from the "carry over" funds under the PSS consolidated grant for last fiscal year. A revised plan for FY 2013 was asked to be submitted by CNMI-PSS to incorporate how these carry-over monies will be utilized.

Thornburgh said that the approval means all teams assigned to compete in various academic and school competitions in the national level can now travel and represent the Commonwealth in prestigious events such as the high school mock trial, National Forensic Leagues, National Junior Forensic Leagues, Mathcourt, International Thespian, Real World Design Challenge, among others.

Also covered under the $250,000 funding is the intra-school competition where students from Tinian and Rota traveled to Saipan for specific contests.

However, Thornburgh admitted that despite a sure means to fund the students' travel to national competitions, PSS continues to seek supplemental funding for their trips through fundraisers and sponsorship from parents and community partners.

The $250,000 for this year's student competitions shows a dramatic decrease from previous years which was at $400,000.

Zoning eyes services of GIS specialist

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The budget request submitted by the Zoning Office for fiscal year 2014 includes "minimum" funding for a specialist in Geographical Information System.

Zoning administrator Therese T. Ogumoro said in an interview yesterday that the GIS specialist will be hired on a contractual basis "to perform digitized updates to the official zoning maps."

GIS is defined as a system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage, and present all types of geographical data. In the simplest terms, it is the merging of cartography, statistical analysis, and database technology.

"We have to make sure that any change in information is reflected on our maps to ensure that accurate information is provided to the community," Ogumoro told *Saipan Tribune*.

She revealed that the Zoning Office requested for a budget "between $3,000 and $5,000" for the GIS specialist who will be paid through the office's professional services account.

Ogumoro described the requested amount as not that expensive given the need for the services.

Acknowledging the limited resources of the CNMI government, Ogumoro said the Zoning Office is "aggressively searching" for technical grants that would provide the needed funding to hire a GIS specialist on a full-time basis.

Zoning Office's proposed FY 2014 budget also includes a $32,000 allotment for the position of enforcement officer, said Ogumoro.

The administrator said they were not able to fill the position for a couple of years due to budget constraints. At present, the Zoning Office has a total of six full-time positions.

Ogumoro noted, though, that an enforcement officer is needed to enable the Zoning Office to implement and enforce existing rules and regulations as it strives to improve the quality of life on island by regulating land use and developments.

She said that the Zoning Office has selected Dwayne Duenas out of the six candidates who applied for the position.

Ogumoro said that Duenas, who currently works as Zoning officer, is the most qualified to perform the duties and responsibilities of an enforcement officer because of his experience in field work.

"His experience would not require additional training when he assumes the position of enforcement officer," she added, referring to Duenas.

NEW PAINT JOB CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Two Northern Marianas College students join other student volunteers to help paint the parking lot of Building V at the NMC campus to help beautify the college. The project was led by Phi Theta Kappa along with the Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College (ASNMC) and the NMC maintenance staff. The other clubs that participated in the Beautify NMC project were NMC Delta Sigma Omicron and the NMC Micronesian Club.

Retail stores subject of unannounced tobacco operation

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Retail establishments selling tobacco were subjected to unannounced inspections last week by the Division of Public Health which wanted to make sure businesses on island were not violating the CNMI Tobacco Law.

Public Health director Roxanne Diaz, in a memorandum issued to tobacco-licensed retail stores, disclosed that the unannounced operation was conducted to ensure the enforcement of Public Law 11-75 and to prevent further problems associated with the sale and use of tobacco products by the CNMI youth.

Furthermore, she said the inspection requires that the youth attempt to make either "consummated or unconsummated purchases" of tobacco products. This means that the minor participating in this project may either complete or not complete the actual purchase transaction of any tobacco products for an establishment to be considered violating the law.

"An act that involves taking the requested tobacco products from its designated place within the establishment and placing the products on the counter, specifying the due amount, or in some cases, inputting the amount due into a cash box/register, without requesting or asking the age of a minor, will be considered a sale," explained Diaz.

Diaz added that a sale is also considered when the youth is asked about their age or identification and even with an honest response that reflects his/her actual age or lack of identification, the tobacco product is sold to the minor. Thus, the establishment will be issued a citation for violating the law.

Public Law 11-75 was passed after the Legislature found that the use of tobacco is on the rise among the minors of the Commonwealth.

According to the corporation, first-time violators will be issued an initial warning citation. Whereas, repeated violators will be receiving either a notice from the Attorney General's Office regarding the repeated violation and possible court date, and/or from the Department of Commerce's Alcohol Beverage and Tobacco Control Office regarding schedule of administrative hearing on the matter.

Meantime, corporation CEO Juan N. Babauta confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* that the agency last Friday was approved a $167,846 grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in support of the corporation's efforts in preventing diabetes and for the tobacco programs. The budget period is from March 31, 2013 through March 30, 2014.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
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INVITATION FOR BIDS
This ad is paid by NMHC with HUD funds.

NMHC IFB 2013-002
Amendment No. 01
Building Maintenance of NMHC's Housing Units in Saipan

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, are hereby giving notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids for the Building Maintenance of NMHC's Housing Units in Saipan.

Interested individuals or firms may pick up a copy of the Project Package beginning Friday, March 22, 2013, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office on **Monday, April 1, 2013, at 9:00 a.m.**, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan. Bidders will have the opportunity to tour the housing subdivisions and inspect several housing units owned by NMHC that will be covered under the proposed contract. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder. Inquiries regarding this solicitation must be addressed in writing to the NMHC Corporate Director at P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 3, 2013.

Sealed bids must be marked **NMHC-IFB 2013-002**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950, not later than **10:00 a.m.**, local time **Thursday, April 11, 2013**. Bids received after the date and time will not be accepted. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notice of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m.**, local time, **Thursday, April 11, 2013**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **Thursday, April 11, 2013**, and must be received at Procurement and Supply no later than **Thursday, April 18, 2013**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan at **10:30 a.m.**, local time, **Friday, April 19, 2013**. However, if no notice of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m.**, local time on Thursday, April 11, 2013.

All labor on this project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of $5.55 per hour which took effect on October 1, 2012 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of $.50 per hour as announced by the U.S. Department of Labor and/or the CNMI Department of Labor, whichever is higher.

NMHC hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that, in any contacts entered into pursuant to this advertisement, small, minority businesses and women's business enterprises will be afforded equal opportunity to submit bids and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, religion, sex, disabilities or national origin.

This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires the successful bidder to the "maximum extent feasible", take affirmative steps to provide training, contracting and employment opportunities and help ensure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents in Saipan.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be awarded a contract with NMHC.

NMHC reserves the right to reject any and all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in the bids if determined to be in its best interest. All bids received shall become the property of the Commonwealth Government.

/s/ **JESSE S. PALACIOS**
Corporate Director

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, Procurement & Supply

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF
MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Estate of	]	**CIVIL ACTION NO. 05-0113 D**
ESTEBAN RASIANG NOGIS, Deceased.	]	**SEVENTH AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on April 16, 2008, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Tract No. 22703-3 containing an area of 1,484 square meters, more or less.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, April 5, 2013, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 11th day of March, 2013:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB13-DEQ-094 (ROTA)

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: APRIL 11, 2013 • TIME: 11:00 A.M.

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COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARCTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) – (D).

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
SECRETARY OF DEQ

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Next round of JKPL ukulele classes set

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library is offering the next round of after-school ukulele classes following the success of the program.

Now on its second cycle for the year, the ukulele classes will be held from 4pm to 5pm every Thursday from April 4 to May 23.

Erlinda C. Naputi, JKPL Children of Our Homeland Center coordinator, said yesterday that the success of the ukulele classes proved to be two-fold, as it also became an effective way to encourage the public to visit the library.

Naputi disclosed that many community members have not been to the library until they bring their children to attend the ukulele classes.

"We see parents who read while waiting for their children to finish the ukulele lessons. They also get to invite their siblings, cousins, or friends to the library. That's why we believe it's been a successful program," she told *Saipan Tribune.*

Local musician Larry Lee is once again handling the ukulele classes which will have two types: beginner class for new learners or those who want to refresh their skills, and the intermediate class for those who passed the beginner's level.

The classes, which cost $50 for all eight sessions, are open both adults and children at least 8 years old. Naputi noted that advance registration and payment is required and that a minimum of 15 students must be enrolled for the classes to proceed.

Students are also required to provide their own ukuleles and a folder to hold music sheets. Plastic sheet protectors and a three-ring binder are recommended.

Parents and guardians would need to sign a liability waiver form, and participating children must adhere to public library policies and procedures.

According to Naputi, they have been receiving a lot of inquiries over the phone regarding the next cycle for the ukulele classes after the participants' class presentation held at the library on March 21.

"Because of the demand from our patrons, we offer them this program once again. We invite all interested individuals to sign up for our after-school ukulele classes," she added.

For more information, visit JKPL in Susupe or call 235-7316/7322/7323 or fax 235-7550.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The initial batch students of Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's after-school ukulele classes perform in this file photo.

IN COMMEMORATION OF ARBOR DAY

Brabu Pharmacy to give away tree seedlings

Arbor Day is tree planting day! It is usually celebrated on the mainland the last Friday in April, but it has been celebrated in the CNMI on various dates to coincide with Earth Day activities on April 22nd, and later in the year to take advantage of our seasonal rains.

Brabu Pharmacy and Wellness Center believes that maintaining a green environment sustains our own sense of well-being, which in turn promotes total wellness.

In celebration of Arbor and Earth Day, Brabu Pharmacy will be giving away tree seedlings to individuals who promise to plant and care for the trees. Ted Parker, Brabu Pharmacy co-owner and manager, started native pandanus and decorative beetlenut seedlings over the past month in preparation. "We also have a few avocado, noni, and mango saplings to give away that started as 'volunteers' in our compost bin at home," stated Parker, "These larger trees need a bit more space than palms so you will want to carefully consider where you plant them."

Seedlings will be given one per person on a first-come first-serve basis starting Monday, April 8.

"Those individuals that would like a seedling may stop by Brabu Pharmacy during regular business hours, 9am to 6pm Monday through Friday, or Saturday from 9am to 1pm to pick one up. Parker reminds planters to, "be sure to find a suitable location on your property which avoids power lines and remember to give them plenty of water through the dry season."

Brabu Pharmacy invites other private home growers to join in and contribute to tree planting events being coordinated by the CRM, DEQ, DLNR Forestry, NRCS, MINA, and other non-profit environmental groups and do not forget the Island Wide Clean-up April 26 and 27.

Remember, Healthy Planet, Brabu Hamyu! For more information about free seedlings, contact Brabu Pharmacy at 233-AMOT (2668). ***(PR)***

BUSINESS BRIEFS

MHS allowing late orders of graduation items

Marianas High School is now allowing late orders for graduation items (cap, gown, tassel, diploma, and cover) until April 5, 2013, 1pm. Those interested must pay at least half of the total amount they are ordering. MHS said this is the last and final order for all graduation materials. Orders will be placed on April 5, 2013, but there is no guarantee that the items will arrive on time.

If you have any questions, call the Main Office at 237-3206. ***(PR)***

Brass Studio Recital at UOG April 7

University of Guam Fine Arts faculty will be performing a Brass Studio Recital on Sunday, April 7 at 3PM in the UOG Fine Arts Theater. Admission is free and open to the public.

The recital will feature the Horn Quartet of the Guam Symphony, which is directed by UOG's own Dr. Stephen Bednarzyk and the UOG Low Brass Trio, which includes Bob Schlub on French horn, Troy McVey on tuba and Jeffrey Meyer on tuba. The trio will be accompanied by Stephen Bednarzyk on piano.

For more information, contact Dr. Jeffrey Meyer at jmeyer@uguam.uog.edu. ***(PR)***

FREE Career Prep Worshops:
April 9
11am: On-Campus Employment Opportunities Exhibit, Student Center
1pm: Resume Writing with Jack Kiyoshi, Student Center
April 10
10am: Free Health Screening - NMC Nursing, Student Center
12pm: One on One with Dr. James Hofschneider and Dr. John Tudela, Student Center
1pm: Dress for Success - Michelle Sablan / Interview Prep with Laila Boyer, Student Center
April 11
11am: DPS/Fire Panel and Exhibit, D-1
1pm: Employer Expectations - Josephine Mesta, D-1
April 16
11am: Protect Your Environment - MINA, Student Center
1pm: Customer Service - Chavel Green, Student Center
April 17
11am: Fair Labor Standards Act - Dan Wang and Dean Tenorio, Student Center
1pm: Handling Your Finances - Hermie Matsumoto and Joanne Aldan, Student Center
April 18
CAREER FAIR DAY, 9am-12pm, Rm. D-1
The Career Fair day will feature many companies and organizations looking to fill job vacancies. All job seekers in the community are encouraged to attend!
Career Fair 2013
April 18, 2013 | Let NMC help you land a job.
Supported with funds from COLLEGE ACCESS CHALLENGE GRANT
For more information about the Career Fair, please visit www.nmcnet.edu, or call 234-5498 ext. 1313

CLARISSA V. DAVID

PHI Pharmacy vice president Bruce Cohen, fourth right, hands a ceremonial $1,000 check to 2013 Marianas March Against Cancer Committee overall chair Manny Borja in a brief presentation yesterday afternoon. Joining them are PHI Pharmacy interns Jessica Ku and Tina Marrie McDonald, Commonwealth Cancer Association program manager Juan L. Babauta, and MMAC committee members Nola Hix, Chris Concepcion, and L.J. Castro.

PHI donates $1K to MMAC

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

PHI Pharmacy is looking at communicating with drug companies to provide additional support to the non-profit group Commonwealth Cancer Association.

Vice president and pharmacist Bruce A. Cohen said most drug companies have the "compassionate drug program" wherein low-income patients can qualify for discounts when buying their costly medication to treat cancer.

For now, though, Cohen said they will be donating $1,000 in cash and will have a participating team in the upcoming Marianas March Against Cancer.

Cohen and other staffers made the donation official in a brief ceremony attended by members of the 2013 MMAC Committee.

While the pharmaceutical business has been supportive of MMAC since the event's inception, this would be the first time that it will participate as a team, noted Cohen.

"We'll get as many of our staff as possible and get them involved in fundraising activities to support MMAC," he added.

MMAC overall committee chair Manny Borja, for his part, said they are pleased to have PHI Pharmacy once again on board in the fight against cancer.

"As a pharmacy, PHI works closely with the medical community and the patients so it's really great to have them on our side," he told *Saipan Tribune.*

Borja said that so far, about 18 teams are participating and competing for several awards under different categories during the 12-hour MMAC event which begins at 6am on April 26 at the Hopwood Jr. High School Field in Chalan Piao.

The number of teams may still increase in the coming days, according to Borja, as a lot of people continue to express their interest in signing up for the largest signature annual fundraiser of CCA which ensures that all funds raised are spent entirely in the CNMI on cancer awareness and prevention programs, cancer patient support services and other cancer-related activities.

For more information about MMAC, visit www.ccamarianas.org, email emanuel.borja@gmail.com or cca@ccamarianas.org, or call 682-0050 or 989-1987.

PHI touts value of pharmacy internship program for NMI

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

PHI Pharmacy is hosting once again two students from the University of Hawaii at Hilo-College of Pharmacy.

Jessica Ku has been on island since Feb. 18 while Tina Marrie McDonald arrived last March 25 as part of their clinical rotation requirement for graduating pharmacy students. Both Ku and McDonald are scheduled to graduate in May.

Bruce Cohen, owner/vice president of PHI Pharmacy, said yesterday that the internship program between their company and the University of Hawaii provides a unique learning experience not only for the interns but also for the community.

"To have these students come down here is an asset to the CNMI. They're still in school so they know the latest in the field of pharmacy, and our patients can learn from the interns' knowledge," he told *Saipan Tribune.*

CLARISSA V. DAVID

PHI Pharmacy vice president Bruce Cohen is flanked by Jessica Ku and Tina Marrie McDonald for a photo at their Navy Hill location yesterday afternoon. Ku and McDonald are interns from the University of Hawaii at Hilo-College of Pharmacy.

Cohen said the interns assist in the free blood pressure and blood sugar screenings that PHI Pharmacy offers at its Dandan location every Tuesday and Thursday.

Both interns have also written articles for the CNMI Health Digest and are working on improving their pamphlets and brochures that provide the public with information on how to maintain their health.

Ku, who has been on island longer, said she loves the people on island as they are "very appreciative" and are willing to learn as much as they can on understanding and taking their medications.

She encouraged the public, especially those who have hypertension and diabetes, to exercise. "It's such a beautiful island that everyone should be out there exercising."

McDonald agrees, adding that diet and lifestyle changes are recommended even for those who are in the "borderline" for blood pressure and blood sugar levels.

Having been on island for only a week, McDonald noted that Saipan has a of good food to offer in addition to the warmth and friendliness of its residents.

"People should learn how to manage their diet and increase their exercise so that hopefully, they won't end up taking medication," she said.

McDonald said she also plans to add a brochure focusing on sexual health in PHI Pharmacy's line of informational materials to prevent sexually transmitted diseases.

UOG Isla Center for the Arts presents Art-a-thon Exhibit

The Isla Center for the Arts at the University of Guam is proud to announce the opening of its 15th Annual Art-a-thon Exhibition on April 4, 2013. The exhibit features selected works of art created by students who participated in the 2012-2013 Isla Art-a-thon.

This year's Art-a-thon raised just over $36,000! Forty percent of the funds raised, or $14,400, was returned to the participating schools to purchase art-related materials for the students.

The exhibit includes over 60 works selected from over 968 students from 25 schools who participated in this year's Art-a-thon. Students from elementary, middle, and high schools produced these impressive works using a variety of media including crayon, pastels, colored pencils, ink, collage, markers, watercolors, and acrylics.

The opening reception for this exhibit will be on Thursday, April 4, from 5:45pm to 8:30pm at the Isla Center for the Arts, located in house #15, Dean's Circle on the University of Guam campus in Mangilao. Admission is free.

This project is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency, Government of Guam, Office of the Governor, and the University of Guam. Corporate sponsors for the Art-a-thon include Cocos Island Resort, ComPacific, Fish Eye Marine Park, McDonald's of Guam, Matson Foundation, and Whimsy.

The Isla Center for the Arts at the University of Guam is open to the public free of charge. Gallery hours are Monday-Friday 10am-5pm; Saturdays 10am-2pm; closed on Sundays and holidays.

Please call 735-2965 or email islacenter@gmail.com for more information. ***(PR)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy silver birthday Justine Marie Miayo who is celebrating her special day today, April 2, 2013. Wishing you another wonderful year of blessing, happiness, and joy! God bless!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Apr. 2, 2004

Spending plan revives fee, tax, hike proposals

The Public School System will receive an estimated $42.46 million should the Legislature adopt the $226.34 million money measure submitted by the Babauta administration yesterday to the Senate and House of Representatives. The proposed budget for the education department represents a 14.11-percent increase from the proposed budget for it in FY2004. The PSS originally requested for $48 million for next fiscal year's funding. It is budgeted at $37.20 this fiscal year. The Department of Public Health will receive $41.39 million or 12.2 percent higher than the FY2004 continuing resolution budget that amounts to $36.89 million. The amount is $4.5 million higher that the ongoing budget this year. The DPH exceeded its budget request by more than $20 million as it asked for $57.104 million for FY2005.

CUC agrees to hook up La Fiesta

The House of Representatives yesterday adopted a resolution asking the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to assume ownership and management of Northern Marianas College's La Fiesta power plant in San Roque. The resolution, authored by former CUC executive director Timothy Villagomez, said its transfer to CUC would relieve the college of huge losses in operations. The resolution says that the CUC has the expertise and capacity to assume control and management of the power plant. It also says that CUC is in a position to optimally maximize the use of the power plant for the benefit of the Commonwealth.

Apr. 2, 2005

NMC wants $60K reimbursement for La Fiesta

Northern Marianas College is seeking reimbursement for the nearly $60,000 shortfall it incurred from the operation of the La Fiesta shopping complex for more than two months. NMC president Antonio Deleon Guerrero reported that La Fiesta mall generated total revenues of $62,161 from Dec. 27, 2004 through March 8, 2005. The college, however, spent $119,790 for the operation of the facility. Thus, a shortfall of $57,629 was incurred for the period. In a letter to Gov. Juan N. Babauta, Guerrero noted that the official transfer of the La Fiesta mall to the CNMI Executive Branch took effect Jan. 31, 2005.

Costs for adjuncts, overloads draining NMC funding

The employment of part-time instructors and payment of overloads took away over $645,000 of the Northern Marianas College's funds for programs and services in fiscal year 2004. NMC president Antonio Deleon Guerrero said this to illustrate why the administration should provide the college with assistance in covering these costs. Deleon Guerrero said in a letter to Gov. Juan N. Babauta that the cost for adjuncts and overloads have steadily increased over the past five years, indicating that the institution needs to rely on adjunct instructors to fill the void left by lack of funding for necessary full time employees.

Apr. 2, 2006

PSS bids for kitchen and system upgrade

The Public School System will soon upgrade its high school cafeteria equipment and operation data system to align them with the school system's primary goal of healthy and nutritious meals for public schoolchildren in the CNMI. PSS Food and Nutrition Service acting director Dorin Salas said the Central Office will soon release a Request for Proposal to prospective vendors for the school system's upgrade of its kitchen warmers and holding cabinets in the school area. "The RFP will be released next week to vendors," Salas said. She said that PSS is also acquiring a new automated system that will allow the Food and Nutrition Service group to assess the amount or the number of the meals being purchased.

Only half of SPED teachers have taken PRAXIS

Special Education contact teachers were reminded to comply with the U.S. Department of Education's requirement to also take the certification exams PRAXIS 1 and 2. PSS SPED program officer Joanne Nicholls stressed the importance of taking the exam during a regular monthly meeting Friday for CNMI contact teachers at the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning. Of some 40 NMI contact teachers who attended the Friday meeting, only 10 of them had already taken and passed PRAXIS 1, while 10 have taken and passed PRAXIS 2. Ten of the 40 contact teachers said they are still waiting for the results of their exam. The rest have signed up for future exams.

Admin bats for re-lending program for small businesses

Energy event promo for Saipan residents

The CNMI Energy Division announces that it will be hosting another event for the distribution of Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) under the Energy, Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) to provide individuals residing on Saipan the opportunity to receive free energy-efficient ENERGY STAR® rated bulbs to help reduce their home's energy consumption and to encourage and promote energy conservation within the CNMI.

The EECBG staff will be distributing eight energy-efficient ENERGY STAR rated CFL's and a re-usable bag to each residential consumer at the DPW/Energy Division Block Grant Office in Springs Development Plaza along Chalan Pale Arnold Rd. (Middle Rd.). The EVENT will be available on the dates specified below and CFL's will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis and while supplies lasts.

Distribution will be made on April 10-12, 2013, from 7:30am to 4:30pm.

In order to receive the CFL's and a re-usable bag, residential consumers must present a valid identification card with photo and a copy of their most recent CUC utility bill with their name on the billing. Only 1 re-usable bag containing eight CFLs will be issued per household. Businesses are not eligible to participate in the event.

For more information or questions regarding the event, please visit the CNMI Energy Division's website at www.cnmienergy.com or call the Energy Division's EECBG Office at (670) 664-4487/89/90. ***(Office of the Governor)***

WARRIOR OF THE WEEK

Senior Airman Delayne Griffin

AIR FORCE PERSONNEL
VISION
"Professionals providing responsive, agile support to our Air Force and its people, from peace to war."
GRIFFIN
U.S. AIR FORCE

U.S. AIR FORCE /STAFF SGT. LUIS LOZA GUTIERREZ

Senior Airman Delayne Griffin, a career development technician with 319th Force Support Squadron, poses for a photo at the entryway of the 319th FSS Military Personnel Section on Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D. on March 25, 2013. Griffin was named the Grand Forks AFB's Warrior of the North for the fourth Week of March 2013.

By STAFF SGT. LUIS LOZA GUTIERREZ
319TH AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Rank and name: Senior Airman Delayne Griffin
Unit: 319th Force Support Squadron
Duty title: Career Development Technician
Time in service: 3 years, 2 months
Hometown: Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands

Why is serving in the Air Force important to you? Coming from a small island in the Pacific, I saw the many opportunities the Air Force offered me that I would not have today had I chose to stay in Saipan (a U.S. territory). I feel it's important to serve in the Air Force as a way of giving back to my country the benefits it has offered me, along with providing a better and safer home to my daughters and people of the United States. I'm proud to serve alongside my brothers and sisters defending our freedom.

What moment or accomplishment as a Warrior of the North are you most proud of and why? The moment we gather for base functions and yell, "Grilled cheese to IDs!" Even though I have a little girl voice it shows the pride I have for being a part of the 319th Force Support Squadron.

What is the favorite part of your job? There are several things I enjoy about my job. I enjoy knowing that I'm responsible for assisting with updating a member's promotion in order to ensure he or she gets paid correctly and I enjoy renewing expired or malfunctioning IDs because it helps me make sure people have legitimate access to the base and their computer so they can get their jobs done. However, if I had to choose one thing, I would have to say it's assisting people with their out-processing because of a retirement or separation. I enjoy seeing the expression of pride and relief that shows up on their faces because they know they've fulfilled their military service to their country. It's a nice thing to see especially on a retiree's face after I hand them their ID.

Who inspires you and why? My grandfather, Tiofil, is my inspiration. He taught me that no matter what obstacles come my way, having confidence in myself and God will help get me through anything.

What's the first thing that made you think Grand Forks Air Force Base was a cool place other than the temperature or weather? Honestly, the snow. As I mentioned earlier, I came from an island in the Pacific, so I was accustomed to the tropical weather all year round. We really had two seasons: sunny or rainy. I had never seen snow before in my life. And thanks to Grand Forks Air Force Base, I can say I'm all "snowed" out.

Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider, through the Department of Commerce and in partnership with the Commonwealth Development Authority, will be applying for the Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) through the USDA Rural Development Business and Cooperative Assistance Program.

The IRP is one of four lending programs by the USDA Rural program that the administration deems critical and needed during this time to rejuvenate lending activities for small businesses.

According to USDA's website, "The purpose of the IRP program is to alleviate poverty and increase economic activity and employment in rural communities. Under the IRP program, loans are provided to local organizations (intermediaries) for the establishment of revolving loan funds. These revolving loan funds are used to assist with financing business and economic development activity to create or retain jobs in disadvantaged and remote communities. Intermediaries are encouraged to work in concert with state and regional strategies, and in partnership with other public and private organizations that can provide complimentary resources."

Inos and Hofschneider hope to bring the program to the CNMI and a lot closer to those already in need of financial assistance as a result of banking declinations, yet having potential and are without serious delinquency records.

Currently, the Pacific Islands Development Bank (PIDB), of which the CNMI is a member, applied for and received the IRP grant on behalf of the CNMI and its member islands. The USDA Rural program, however, encouraged that the CNMI apply for the program directly in addition to what PIDB currently was awarded.

In a recent teleconference with USDA officials in Hawaii, Commerce Secretary Sixto Igisomar and CDA's Oscar Camacho joined the Freely Associated States, Guam, and cooperative lending institutions to further discuss the benefits of the program.

Inos and Hofschneider both expressed their appreciation to USDA's Chester Cabral and Chris Kanazawa's outreach efforts to CNMI.

"Lt. Gov. Hofschneider and I express our appreciation to the USDA Hawaii team for their initiative in reaching out to assist with our need to strengthen our lending activities. Our economy is similar to a puzzle; we need to put the pieces together through different economic programs toward a stable economy," added Inos.

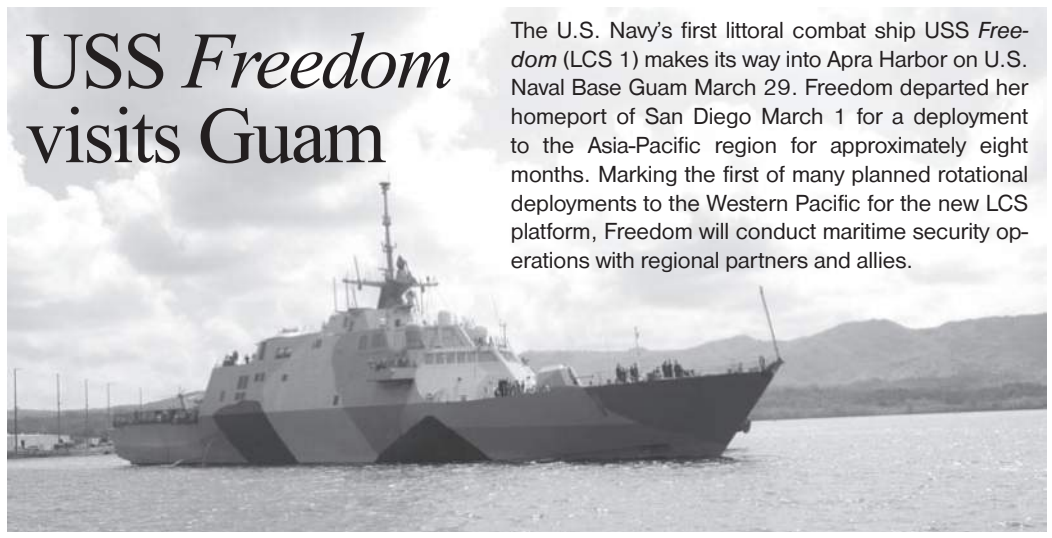
"We look forward to working with CDA to put together the application package so that we can bring this opportunity to our local entrepreneurs. The partnership between CDA, USDA, and our SBDC offices will only move us forward," remarked Secretary Igisomar.

The three other programs offered by USDA are: 1) Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG); 2) Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP) and; Rural Economic Development Grant Program (REDG). These were other opportunities discussed during the teleconference call. CDA and Commerce intend to further discuss these other programs and their applicability to CNMI's needs.

For further details on the program, please visit: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_irp.html or email Commerce's Deputy Secretary Ivan A. Blanco at deputy.blanco@commerce.gov.mp. ***(Office of the Governor)***

USS *Freedom* visits Guam

The U.S. Navy's first littoral combat ship USS *Freedom* (LCS 1) makes its way into Apra Harbor on U.S. Naval Base Guam March 29. Freedom departed her homeport of San Diego March 1 for a deployment to the Asia-Pacific region for approximately eight months. Marking the first of many planned rotational deployments to the Western Pacific for the new LCS platform, Freedom will conduct maritime security operations with regional partners and allies.



By TIMOTHY WILSON
MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS

SANTA RITA, Guam—USS *Freedom* (LSC 1), the U.S. Navy's first littoral combat ship, arrived in Guam, the furthest western U.S. territory, during her first Pacific deployment last March 29.

While in Guam, USS *Freedom*'s "Gold" crew will participate in community service opportunities, including mentoring island children, caring for the elderly during the Easter holiday weekend and experiencing local culture. The ship will also conduct scheduled maintenance, resupply and make any necessary repairs, including the Ship Service Generators (SSDGs), Freedom recently experienced some issues related to these systems and four Naval Sea Systems Command in-service engineering agents met the ship on the pier to ensure any further complications will not occur.

"The crew has worked really hard on this ship to get it ready to go, both in a training aspects and an operational aspect for her first deployment," said Cmdr. Timothy Wilke, Freedom's Gold Crew commanding officer. "As we continue to march westward, we are the first littoral combat ship pulling into Guam and the first time pulling in for 7th Fleet."

The littoral combat ship design is unique in what Wilke calls a "plug and play" ship. Freedom is fast, agile and mission-focused designed to employ modular mission packages that can be configured for numerous operational needs including maritime interdiction, anti-drug operations, mine counter measures and anti-submarine warfare.

"Depending on what you want to do, it is incredibly maneuverable," Wilke said. "Driving the ship, we can spin on the nose, spin center line, back the ship up (or) walk the ship sideways. These are features that are really needed and what the ship was really built for, in shallow waters, we need to be maneuverable."

Due to the 14-foot draft of the ship, entering into shallow waters, including swamps and other wetlands, will enable Freedom to accomplish many of her proposed surface operational demands. In addition, Freedom employs a paint design that disorientates and confuses the human eye, helping the ship's hull avoid visual detection.

"We are deployed to conduct a whole myriad of tasks across a wide spectrum of operations. That is what we were trained for, it's what we have been certified for, and that's what we bring to 7th Fleet," Wilke said. "We stand ready on the 7th Fleet waters to serve that commitment."

USS *Freedom* will continue to sail west to engage and bolster regional partnerships with navies in Southeast Asia during her eight-month deployment, showing a clear signal of the Navy's enduring commitment to maintain secure and stable security in the Pacific. ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

End hunger strike before it creates new martyrs for terrorists

The hunger strike by prisoners at the U.S. detention facility in Guantanamo calls attention once more to a maddening problem that the Obama administration, Congress and the public would prefer not to think about: What to do with 166 captives confined to an island prison with de facto life sentences under a judicial system that they deem unfair and unjust?

Protests of one sort or another inside the island prison have been ongoing practically since the day the first detainees arrived in January 2002. As time goes by, the protests have become better organized and more widespread as frustration deepens among detainees. Some of them have been confined for more than a decade and still see no end to the adjudication process. Nor can anyone say with certainty when their cases will be concluded, nor reasonably predict the ultimate fate of the detainee population.

No surprise, then, that Guantanamo has become a powerful symbol of injustice for many people around the world, particularly Muslims, including those who otherwise bear no ill will toward the United States. For terrorists, the prison has long been a valuable recruiting tool. Congress has been perfectly content to let this all happen without contributing useful ideas for dealing in a fair and humane manner with accused terrorists caught overseas. Out of sight, out of mind seems to be the prevailing mindset on Capitol Hill. Lawmakers have blocked President Obama's efforts to close the prison and send detainees to mainland prisons and have required security guarantees before they can be sent to their home countries or elsewhere.

Instead of closure, the momentum may be headed in the opposite direction. Earlier this month, Gen. John Kelly, head of the U.S. Southern Command, said in congressional testimony that as much as $170 million may be needed to improve facilities for the troops stationed at Guantanamo Bay.

"I'm assuming Guantanamo will be closed someday," the Marine general said. "But if you look at the past 11 years when it was supposed to be temporary, who knows where it's going?"

As far as Congress is concerned, it's staying put. Indeed, lawmakers may well spend the money to create yet another justification to keep the prison camp open for decades to come.

Unlike Congress, however, Mr. Obama cannot assume an irresponsible attitude. A White House spokesman said this week that the "president's team is closely monitoring the hunger strikers at Guantanamo Bay." And then what?

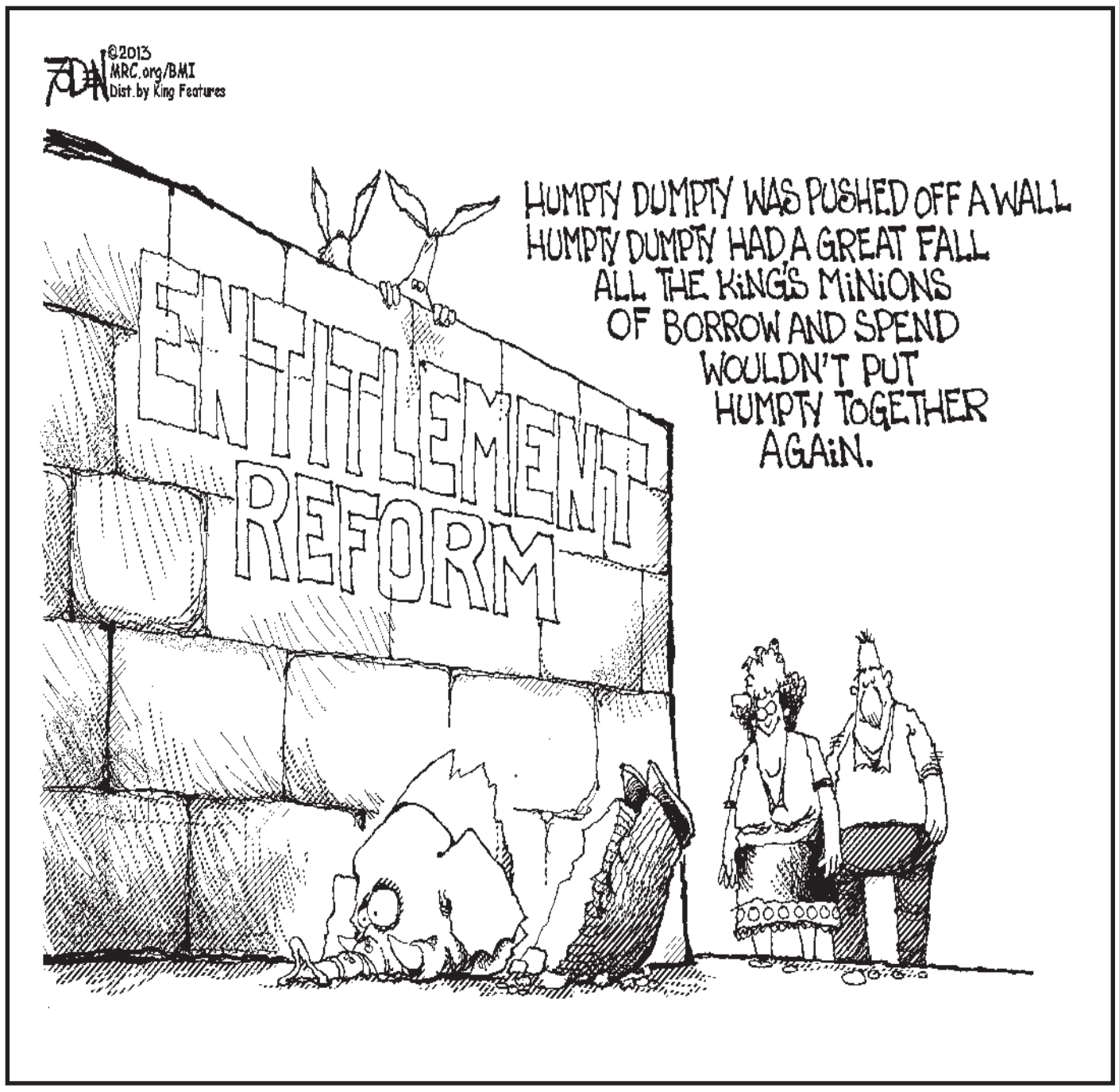
Lawyers for the accused terrorists say their clients claim that mistreatment of Qurans by prison guards sparked the hunger strike. But camp officials say prisoners were angry that President Obama failed to raise the Guantanamo issue in his State of the Union message.

Whatever the reason, there is no question that the strike is growing, and camp authorities must find a way to bring it to an end. It's their prison. They're the ones in charge.

If commanders can't find a way to accommodate the prisoners without sacrificing security, Mr. Obama would do well to appoint a high-level U.S. representative to get the job done. "Monitoring" won't produce a solution.

The underlying cause of the strike is the hopelessness of de-

See HUNGER on Next Page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ENTITLEMENT REFORM
HUMPTY DUMPTY WAS PUSHED OFF A WALL.
HUMPTY DUMPTY HAD A GREAT FALL.
ALL THE KING'S MINIONS OF BORROW AND SPEND
WOULDN'T PUT HUMPTY TOGETHER AGAIN.

Eating manna from heaven … or somewhere

By FRIDA GHITIS
The Miami Herald

Frida Ghitis writes about global affairs for The Miami Herald.

AMMAN, Jordan—In the Middle East, the lines between fact and fiction, history and religion, myth and reality can become maddeningly blurred. That's why you may find it difficult to believe me if I tell you I just ate manna from heaven. It's true.

It all started with a casual conversation. I was chatting over Turkish coffee with my Iraqi friend Reem, who lives in Jordan. The conversation turned to the parallels between the Quran and the Bible, and then to Passover and the story of Exodus, a version of which, incidentally, also appears in the Quran.

I was non-expertly recounting my vague knowledge of the biblical story of the Israelites led by Moses crossing the Sinai desert out of Egypt. We noted that Moses made it all the way to Mount Nebo, just outside Amman, from where he could see the Promised Land he never reached. On a clear day you can see Israel from that mountaintop.

During the 40 years in the wilderness, I related to my friend, who grew up in a world where the Bible was not frequently discussed, the Israelites ate a strange, wonderful and mysterious food said to be sent from heaven by God.

"It was called manna," I told her. She looked at me with a slight frown and tilted her head. "Did you say manna?"

It turns out there is a rather mysterious food in this part of the world—the best of it comes from Iraq—that goes by the name of Mann al-Sama, or Manna from Heaven.

Moments before, as the sound of dhuhr, the midday call to Muslim prayer sounded faintly in the distance, as Jews around the world celebrated Passover, commemorating the flight from bondage in Egypt into the Promised Land, I had my first taste of manna.

Is it a fruit? Is it bread? Is it candy?

Reem brought me a compact, oddly heavy box, about the size of a thick book. It came from her private stash, hand carried from Iraq by one of her friends. In Arabic characters the box certified the contents come from Sulemaniyah, in Kurdish northern Iraq.

I pried the loosely nailed lid to find thickly packed white sugary powder. The lighter-than-air sweet flour flew everywhere and a scent of cardamom rose from the edible treasure as I dug into the box, excavating clumps of something resembling a taffy; misshapen pieces of a food vaguely reminiscent of Colombian melcocha, but not nearly as gooey or sweet.

It turns out the stuff does, in fact, appear out of nowhere—as if from heaven.

It is not a fruit. It is not a baker's or a candy-maker's confection. Instead, it blows in the wind and lands on the ground, generously served by nature, although my nicely packaged gift showed some unmistakably human intervention.

There are different varieties from different sources, but the one I ate is formed by sap that escapes from a tree.

According to legend it has been doing so for thousands of years, from the days of the Prophet Musa, better known to us as Moses. It's as if a hole in a maple tree allowed maple syrup to fly out, and in the arid desert air the sap dried and hardened into a tasty resin and then rained on the ground.

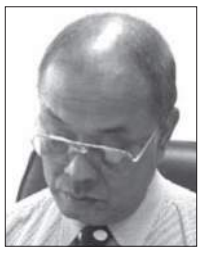
I will not venture into a discussion about what exactly the Israelites ate as they crossed the desert. There is plenty else to debate in this part of the world. Food, by the way, recently came up as a source of friction during President Obama's visit, when Palestinians and Israelis argued about which one of them could claim falafel as their own before the Leader of the Free World, whatever that is.

The intriguing notion, however, lingers in my mind about a story found in the Bible and in the Quran, about a food mentioned as a gift from providence; to believers, a miracle; to skeptics, a magic trick, a legend to dismiss. It's hard to draw the line between myth and reality, between possible and impossible.

But the manna I just ate was miraculously real. And it was perfectly delicious.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Kutturan Fanliheñg Familia



By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*

'Nai echu tautau i patgon lahe, naturatmiente ha tutuhon planun inestablsen familiaña mismu. Masoyu' ni manainaña na u fan hatsa guma' para fanliheñg i nuebu na familia. Enfin ha tutuhon ennau na planu.

Adumidide' sige ha usune muna' tachu i primet na guma' familia. Mañaunau lokue' i pumalu gi ayudun kanai 'nai sige mahatsa i pisu, liga yan atuf guma'.

Guaha ha' suette ya ti presisu na u ayau gi bañku'. Lau memegaiña debi ha' u fan ayau dañkulu na kantidan salape' para mahatsan primet na gima' familia.

Estague' fitme gi kutturata gi inestablesen nuebu na familia i para u guaha fanliheñg para I nuebu na tinituhon.

■■■

Adahe Futtunamu

I patgon palao'an ni mana'fañgatga (mapotge) pot diskuidu ensegidas ha huchum pettan futunaña sa' esta iridau. Nuebe mesis na tiempu estake u fan diskatga dispues debi u pogsai ya u kreansa finañaguña.

Sumen namase' para hinanauña piot 'nai ha tantan-gue' i lahe ya ma'pos man-aligau otru ni tai achake, bonita yan fitme sinseña. Seguruyu' na mafattu dañkulu na sinetsut 'nai ha konsidedera haf' finaposña espesiatmente, haf' mamamaila'. Piot ya ti hana' fonhayan high school 'nai tinetpe nu este na chinatsaga.

Gi mismu tiempu ti libre i munamapotge' sa' libianu mana' fan suppotta ni piniloña. Yangin ha tuñgu' pumega, pues debi u tuñgu haf' pinegaña ya mauleg u komprende na ti ga'ga' i para umafañagu dispues. Yangin tai planu hau umasagua, ke ya haf' na para unna' tailaye i patgon tautau? Yamu ya patgon-mu palao'an mana' dañu parehu?

I tafanana'an "inaguaiya", gai eskalera na debi kada unu u husga kuantu yan manu china ennau na katman mañglu'. Kau listu hau gumai patgon 'sino obligasion tai finagtos? Kau esta un' hassu kabales haf' para un' fana' dispues? Kau sinsiyu i un' sasañgan na inaguaiya pat puru supin tasi 'nai megaiña "I love you" ke antau na hinassu-mu?

Huñgan guaha tutuhoña i maseha haf' na relasion. Lau i siñiente yan attension ha muebague' gigon gumuaha patgon mafañagu. Esta memegaiña attension humanau guatu gi nesessidat i patgon ke i dos saina. Lau 'nai taiguine masusede, debi i dos u a'arikonose pot para uma-atisa tatte inaguaiyan niha taimanu 'nai pa'gu umasoda'.

Mauleg mas u guaha inadahe gi famaguon famalao'an sa' i lahe hokog ha' i para u tantangue' dispues maliñgu. Yangin sinetta hau dañosu, pues siempre hagu para un' fana' i patte diskuidumu. Fan repara antes de un' ta'yug ginen i kantit. Protehe satton i digno-mu pot no un' lotgun gi taduñg na hoyun sa'pet pot un' ratu na kadu' guinaiya. Un mirese un' romu!

■■■

Prekura Estudiun Miyu

Taya' dinida na i solu passapotte-mu gi todu i mattiron i man-mamamai'la gaige gi eskaleran edukasion-mu. Yangin un' prekura, mas libianu mañoda' mauleg na offisiu (cho'chu'). 'An diskuidau hau, hagu' ha' ta'lu para un' fana' diskuidumu.

I natibu gaige satbasioña gi edukasion famaguon niha. Un' dia ya u fan felis finapos niha gi kolehu, siempre u bira siha mage mas man-preparau para u gu'ot responsablidat makondusen tano'ta mona gi todu man-antau yan appruebau na planu.

Mas u fitme sensian dignu kumu tautau gi todu para u petsige gi ma-atbansan ha'anen natibu guine gi O'Perlas iya Pasifiku. I edukasion i ramenta yan fitme na galaide' gi masimientun pisun gobietnamentu ni mau'udai gi hilu' lai. Mas anchu fan ataña gi haf' dichu debi u petsige para u kone' i linahyan guatu gi yanu na plaset prosperu.

Mientras mas megai bumira siha mage ginen man-eskuela, mas edukau kinalamten-ta gi pinetsigen haf' propiu yan mauleg para i linahyan. Estague' mina pa'gu i tiempu 'nai debi ta soyu' famaguonta na u fan ma-eduka. Siha dispues u chinili' i achon ginen mañainan niha para u giha mona antau yan karera gi hilu' fitme na galaide' tanu'.

Hu huñgog finu un fulanu 'nai man-espipiha checho'ña: "Ti siñayu' sa' ti huna fonhayan eskuela-hu high school". Lastima manalate'ña lau pot lache na kompania na bumasta umeskuela. Hu li'e tristen mataña 'nai ha konsidedera mas libianu na karera mona 'an mohon hana' fonhayan high school.

Kontodu guahu ha estotbayu' tristin sentimentoña. Hu ta'lon sumoyu' na u chage kumechule' maseha GED pot para u upus ayu na chinatsaga gi ha'aniña. Maseha haye na patgon natibu ni hu tuñgu' ti muna' fonhayan i high school, sige u soyu' na u birague' mientras guaha tiempu kumomple i presisu na patte gi tinituhon offisiu.

Mideast lesson on leadership

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Last week, President Obama reminded us, for a brief moment, of the difference the United States can still make in the Middle East when it leads from the front.

I refer to the president's success, during his trip to Jerusalem, in getting Israel and Turkey back on track toward normal relations. The once-close ties between the two Mediterranean powers were cut in 2010 after Israeli forces killed nine Turkish activists on the aid ship Mavi Marmara, which was trying to breach the Israeli blockade of Gaza. This dispute presented a strategic roadblock to any regional efforts to deal with Iran's nuclear program or the civil war in Syria.

Turkey wanted an apology from Israel, which needed reciprocal gestures from the Turks. Three years of backstage talks between Israeli and Turkish diplomats failed to produce a breakthrough, until Obama turned up the pressure on Jerusalem. (Secretary of State John Kerry did likewise in Ankara.)

The apology is due directly to Obama's pressure, and the success of his visit to Israel, says Alon Liel, a former head of Israel's diplomatic mission in Ankara. "Without Obama's being in Jerusalem, it wouldn't have happened," Liel stresses.

I'd go further: Obama's diplomatic achievement reveals that any hopes for regional stability still require an America willing to lead.

Consider the history of the break between Turkey and Israel. Their relations had already begun their sharp slide after the 2008 Israeli invasion of Gaza. The attack ended personal efforts by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan to restart peace talks between Israel and Syria. He told me in a 2009 interview that he was further upset by Israel's refusal to let Turkey deliver relief supplies to Gaza.

The Mavi Marmara deaths infuriated Erdogan, who insisted on an apology and an end to the blockade. Meanwhile, Israelis were outraged that the Turkish leader never criticized rocket attacks on Israeli towns by Hamas from Gaza. Yet, backstage, Israeli and Turkish diplomats—aware of the strategic importance of their past ties—kept trying to negotiate.

In July 2011, Israeli and Turkish sources told me that a compromise was near. They said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was considering an apology for "operational mistakes" during the raid (the very formula he used last week). Then Defense Minister Ehud Barak endorsed the idea. Still nothing happened.

In September 2011, a U.N. commission on the Mavi Marmara incident provided cover for the apology. The commission's report recognized Israel's right to impose a naval blockade on Gaza in order to prevent arms shipments to Hamas, but concluded that the Israeli raid had used "excessive force."

Given the claims by many parties, including Turkey, that the blockade itself was illegal, the U.N. findings were a boon for Israel. All expectations then were that the apology would be forthcoming. Yet, for domestic political reasons, Netanyahu pulled back.

Since then, repeated efforts by U.S. diplomats to end the dispute led nowhere—until Obama decided to apply some muscle. Kerry did the same in Ankara, pressing Erdogan to walk back inflammatory language about Zionism and soften added demands on Israel, beyond the apology.

> *Consider the history of the break between Turkey and Israel. Their relations had already begun their sharp slide after the 2008 Israeli invasion of Gaza. The attack ended personal efforts by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan to restart peace talks between Israel and Syria. He told me in a 2009 interview that he was further upset by Israel's refusal to let Turkey deliver relief supplies to Gaza.*

As Obama was leaving Jerusalem, Netanyahu finally made the call from a trailer parked on the Ben Gurion airport tarmac. Under insistent prodding from Obama, the deal was finally closed (although more details must be worked out before the sides normalize diplomatic relations).

Yet the efforts the president made to achieve a breakthrough in Israeli-Turkish relations raise perplexing questions about his wider approach to the Middle East.

After all, Obama's push to restore ties between Jerusalem and Istanbul was based on hopes that they could provide a strategic anchor to a region dissolving into ever greater chaos. Yet the president has famously chosen to "lead from behind" on Syria (not to mention Iraq and the peace process).

Obama has outsourced military aid to Syrian rebels to Gulf states, which inevitably has led to the strengthening of radical Islamists inside the country at the expense of non-Islamists. Meantime, Syria is collapsing: The war's spillover is destabilizing Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, and Jordan—and threatening Israel.

America's closest European and Arab allies—as well as Turkey—have been desperately looking for signs of U.S. leadership on Syria, yet Obama has appeared paralyzed. U.S. attempts to promote a diplomatic solution to the Syrian crisis have proved unrealistic. American efforts to back an inclusive and moderate Syrian civilian leadership have failed to provide the necessary support.

If Obama's goal in restoring Israeli-Turkish ties is to help stabilize the region, it will have to be part of some larger strategic plan that looks at the bigger picture, especially Syria. The president's show of leadership in thawing those ties was indeed impressive, but it won't have much impact on the region unless he replicates it on a wider scale.

HUNGER

From Page 10

tainees. To ease tensions, Mr. Obama should make Guantanamo more transparent and more adherent to the rule of law. Before all else, though, the focus must be on ending the hunger strike before the protest produces more martyrs for the cause of terrorism.

(c)2013 The Miami Herald

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY
Mostly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.
▲87° ▼78°

WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.
▲88° ▼76°

THURSDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.
▲89° ▼76°

FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼76°

SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°

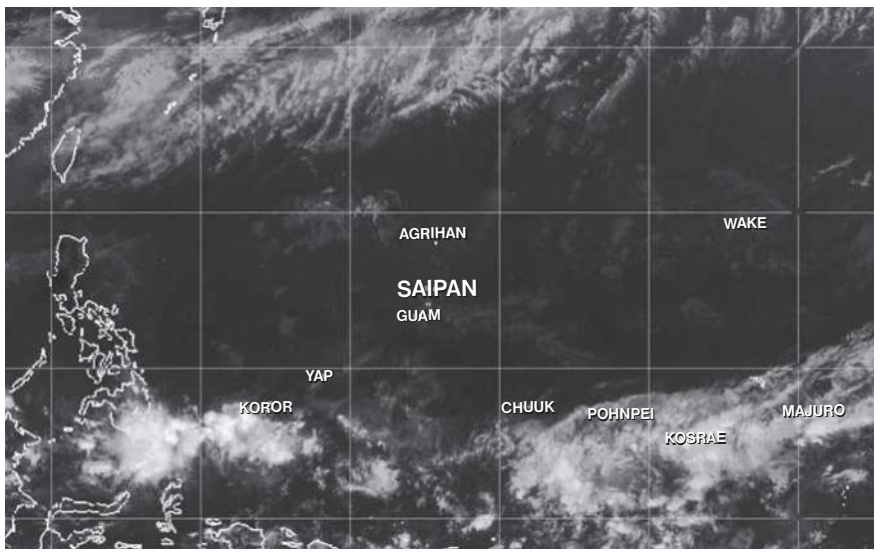
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲88	▼79
Palau	Showers	▲87	▼78
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲84	▼78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲85	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲75	▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲69	▼39
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲76	▼71
Honolulu	Showers	▲76	▼64
London	Mostly Sunny	▲44	▼30
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲65	▼52
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲94	▼80
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲68	▼51
Miami	Thundershowers	▲82	▼65
New York	Windy	▲59	▼32
Osaka	Rain	▲62	▼52
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲48	▼33
Pusan	Windy	▲64	▼45
Rome	Rain	▲58	▼47
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲65	▼47
San Francisco	Showers	▲61	▼52
Seoul	Showers	▲56	▼37
Tokyo	Showers	▲61	▼57
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲66	▼37

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, APRIL 1, 2013
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends southwestward from 25N140E to beyond 23N130E. Cloudiness and scattered showers are along and up to 400 miles northwest of the shear line. A surface trough northwest of Saipan runs from 17N137E to 21N139E with scattered showers within 150 miles of the trough. Low-level convergence is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms just south of Koror between 3N and 7N from 130E to 139E and well southeast of Yap within 75 miles of 3N143E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms across a large area southeast of Chuuk and south of Pohnpei across Kosrae between the equator and 8N from 150E to 165E and across the southern Marshall Islands including Majuro between 2N and 7N from 165E to 180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:40 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
7:07 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
12:09 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
7:44 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:12 AM	6:30 PM
Wednesday	6:11 AM	6:30 PM
Thursday	6:11 AM	6:30 PM
Friday	6:10 AM	6:30 PM
Saturday	6:09 AM	6:30 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today		11:00 AM
Wednesday	12:17 AM	12:00 PM
Thursday	1:12 AM	12:59 PM
Friday	2:02 AM	1:57 PM
Saturday	2:50 AM	2:53 PM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 8, 2013

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 4, 6, 7
UA5062	4:40am	5:30am	1, 3, 5
UA5068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
UA5074	11:10am	12:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5076	3:10pm	4:00pm	Daily
UA5078	6:55pm	7:45pm	Daily
UA5072	9:45pm	10:35pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:00am	8:45am	Daily
DL285	6:30am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7
DL297	4:25pm	7:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ6063	3:30am	7:20am	1, 5
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:00am	8:35am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU7108	3:50am	7:40am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)

XF1734	11:55am	5:10pm	5

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/191	4:35am	9:55am	6 via GUM
UA5062/191	4:40am	9:55am	3 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:15pm	2, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
DL287/173	6:00am	10:35pm	1, 3, 6 via NRT
UA5076/183	3:10pm	8:45pm	Daily via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
UA5072/PR111	9:45pm	7:45am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5076/147	3:10pm	9:45pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA 5069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 4, 6, 7
UA5071	7:05am	7:55am	Daily
UA5073	9:50am	10:40am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
UA5075	1:45pm	2:35pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5077	5:35pm	6:25pm	Daily
UA5079	8:20pm	9:10pm	Daily

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5062	3:35am	4:10am	1, 3, 5
UA5038	10:55am	11:30am	6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL286	7:40pm	12:15am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ6053	8:50pm	2:10am+1	4, 7

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU7107	7:40pm	2:50am+1	4, 7

GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)-SAIPAN

XF1733	8:00pm	12:05am+1	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
DL172/288	7:55am	1:15am+1	2, 4, 7 via NRT
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via NRT
UA190/5077	10:55am	6:25pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/5079	10:55am	9:10pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA5072	10:15pm	7:55am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:55am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5071	11:59pm	7:55am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:35pm	7:55am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

Japan survey finds business sentiment improving

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese manufacturers are more upbeat about business conditions than they were late last year, but less so than expected, a central bank survey found.

The Bank of Japan's "tankan" index for the March quarter rose to minus 8 from minus 12 for large manufacturers, a smaller improvement than analysts had anticipated before Monday's release. A reading below zero means pessimists outnumber optimists, and the tankan forecast for large manufacturers for the June survey was minus 1.

Large firms said they plan to reduce capital spending in the fiscal year that begins Monday by 2 percent, suggesting manufacturers may be unconvinced lax demand is on the rebound, despite aggressive stimulus measures by the government and central bank.

Large nonmanufacturing companies were more positive, at positive 6, up from 4 in December. Smaller nonmanufacturers were less optimistic, at minus 8, up from minus 11 in the previous survey.

The central bank will hold its first policy meeting under a new governor, former Asian Development Bank President Haruhiko Kuroda, later this week. The weak business outlook could spur fresh moves to ease monetary conditions, possibly by increasing BOJ asset purchases or extending the range of maturities for the government bonds it buys.

"It is a near certainty that at least one of the two Board meetings in April will result in some form of additional monetary easing," Capital Economics said in a commentary issued before the tankan's release.

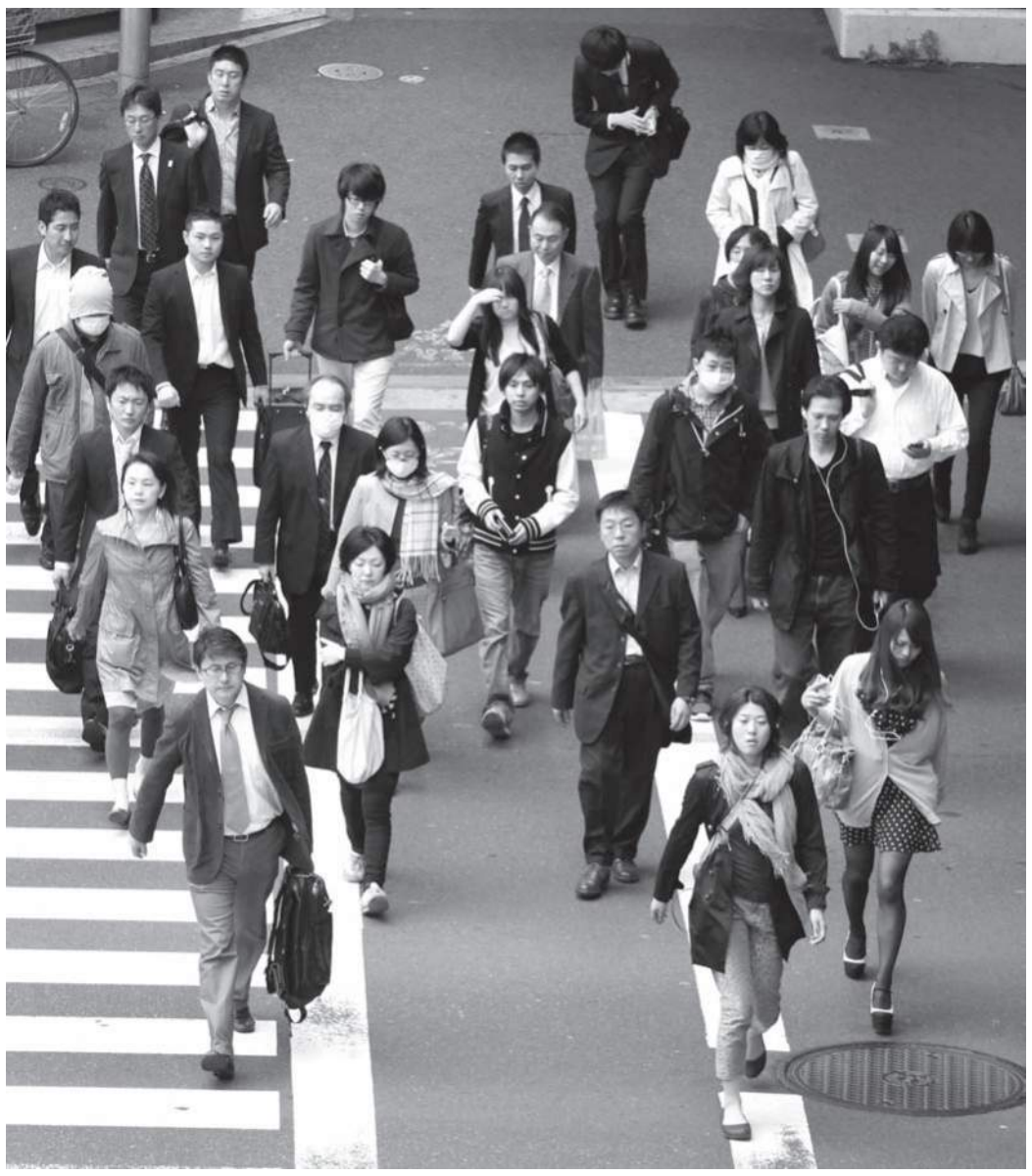
While increased government spending and monetary easing appear to be giving the economy a boost after years of stagnation, economists say longer-term reforms are needed to counter weakening demand due to Japan's aging and shrinking population and excess capacity.

Kuroda has pledged to do whatever he can as central bank governor to help achieve a 2 percent inflation goal demanded by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and end the long bout of deflation, or declining prices, that has discouraged companies from investing more in the domestic economy.

The tankan survey of 10,698 companies, 98.9 percent of which responded, showed the outlook for smaller manufacturers edging slightly lower, to minus 19 from minus 18.

While public works spending will also raise demand and create jobs, the government's longer term strategy for economic revival after more than two decades of stagnation hinges on convincing both companies and consumers to spend more to boost domestic demand.

Japan has relied heavily on export manufacturing to drive growth. But the economy has suffered thanks to weak global demand due to the financial crisis. Many manufacturers have shifted production to less-costly overseas locations to help blunt the impact of the strong Japanese yen, reducing the potential positive impact on exports from the yen's weakening over the past half-year. Meanwhile, the weaker yen has raised costs in yen for imported energy and commodities.



AP

People cross a street in Tokyo, Friday, March 29, 2013. Japan's jobless rate edged higher and industrial production fell slightly in February as consumer prices also fell, underscoring the fragility of the recovery of the world's third-largest economy.

Tech firms bumping up perks to recruit, retain

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP)—Apple's ring-shaped, gleaming "Spaceship Headquarters" will include a world class auditorium and an orchard for engineers to wander. Google's new Bay View campus will feature walkways angled to force accidental encounters. Facebook, while putting final touches on a Disney-inspired campus including a Main Street with a B-B-Q shack, sushi house and bike shop, is already planning an even larger, more exciting new campus.

More than ever before, Silicon Valley firms want their workers at work.

Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer has gone so far as to ban working from home, and many more offer prodigious incentives for coming in to the office, such as free meals, massages and gyms.

This spring, as the tech industry is soaring out of the Great Recession, plans are in the works for a flurry of massive, perk-laden headquarters.

"We're seeing the mature technology companies trying to energize their work environments, getting rid of cube farms and investing in facilities to compete for talent," said Kevin Schaeffer, a principal at architecture and design firm Gensler in San Jose. "That's caused a huge transition in the way offices are laid out."

New Silicon Valley headquarters or expansions are under way at most of the area's major firms, including eBay, Intel, LinkedIn, Microsoft, Netflix, Nvidia and Oracle. Many will be huge: Apple Corp.'s 176-acre campus will be one of the world's largest workplaces. On the outside, many of the new buildings boast striking architectural designs and will collectively be among the most environmentally friendly in the country. Inside, there are walls you can draw on, ping pong tables, Lego stations, gaming arcades and free haircuts.

Critics say that while some workplace perks and benefits are a good thing, the large, multibillion dollar corporate headquarters are colossal wastes of money that snub the pioneering technology these firms actually create.

"Companies led by older management tend to be very controlling, but when I look at people in the 20s or 30s, they're totally capable of working on their own and being productive," said Kevin Wheeler, whose Future of Talent Institute researches and consults on human resources for Silicon Valley businesses. "To have artificial structures that require everybody to be in the office at certain hours of the day is simply asinine."

Wheeler said he thinks Yahoo called everyone back to work "because they had gotten into a culture of laziness," and that the firm will likely loosen the restrictions soon.

Yahoo was, in fact, an early model of Silicon Valley's happy workplace culture, touting their espresso bar and inspirational speakers as a method of inspiring passion and originality. Today yoga, cardio-kickboxing and golf classes at the office, as well as discounts to ski resorts and theme parks, help it receive top ratings as one of America's happiest workplaces.

Rising dollar could hurt earnings in short term

NEW YORK (AP)—The dollar is rising again.

After a drop last autumn, the U.S. dollar has climbed 5 percent against other currencies over the past two months, reaching the highest level since August.

The main reason is the U.S. economy. Although growth is still weak, the outlook for the U.S. is better than elsewhere in the developed world. Europe is stuck in a recession and struggling to control its debt. Japan is trying to push down the value of the yen to boost exports and end deflation.

A strong dollar helps Americans by making imports cheaper and keeping inflation low, but it can hurt U.S. companies two ways. Their goods become more expensive for overseas customers, and the profits on sales abroad are worth less when converted from a foreign currency to dollars.

The impact of the dollar's appreciation is starting to show up in earnings reports. The insurer Aflac, which does much of its business in Japan, says its earnings were hurt as the yen fell against the U.S. currency. Procter & Gamble, which makes Gillette razors and Crest toothpaste, said the stronger dollar was holding back its sales growth overseas.

Many analysts predict that the dollar will continue to rise. Here's a look at what a stronger dollar means for investors. A rising dollar could spell trouble for U.S. companies that make software and consumer products, as well as companies that make basic materials like aluminum.

The tech industry relies heavily on foreign sales for growth. About 56 percent of its revenue comes from outside the U.S., according to research by RBC Capital Markets. As the dollar strengthens, U.S. goods become more expensive overseas, discouraging buyers.

Investors worry that could slow business—and profits. As a result, technology companies are tied with materials makers as the worst industry in the S&P 500 this year, rising just 4.2 percent, compared with 10 percent for the overall market. Business software giant Oracle said in its most recent earnings report, on March 20, that the rising dollar lowered its earnings by about two percent.

The materials industry, which includes Dow Chemical and miner Cliffs Natural Resources, also gets more than half of its sales overseas.

"We would be wary of sectors that derive a lot of their sales overseas, given that fact that we expect the dollar's strength to remain," says Kristen Scarpa, an investment strategist at Barclays Wealth and Investment Management.

Marketing studies help craft health overhaul pitch

WASHINGTON (AP)—How do you convince millions of average Americans that one of the most complex and controversial programs devised by government may actually be a good deal for them?

With the nation still split over President Barack Obama's health care law, the administration has turned to the science of mass marketing for help in understanding the lives of uninsured people, hoping to craft winning pitches for a surprisingly varied group in society.

The law's supporters will have to make the sale in the run-up to an election - the 2014 midterms. Already Republicans are hoping for an "Obamacare" flop that helps them gain control of the Senate, while Democrats are eager for the public to finally embrace the Affordable Care Act, bringing political deliverance.

It turns out America's more than 48 million uninsured people are no monolithic mass. A marketing analysis posted online by the federal Health and Human Services Department reveals six distinct groups, three of which appear critical to the success or failure of the program.

They're the "Healthy & Young," comprising 48 percent of the uninsured, the "Sick, Active & Worried," (29 percent of the uninsured), and the "Passive & Unengaged" (15 percent).

Nation

Texas DA slain in his home; had armed himself

KAUFMAN, Texas (AP)—Kaufman County District Attorney Mike McLelland took no chances after one of his assistant prosecutors was gunned down two months ago. McLelland said he carried a gun everywhere he went and was extra careful when answering the door at his home.

"I'm ahead of everybody else because, basically, I'm a soldier," the 23-year Army veteran said in an interview less than two weeks ago.

On Saturday, he and his wife were found shot to death in their rural home just outside the town of Forney, about 20 miles from Dallas.

While investigators gave no motive for the killings, Forney Mayor Darren Rozell said: "It appears this was not a random act."

"Everybody's a little on edge and a little shocked," he said.

The slayings came less than two weeks after Colorado's prison chief was shot to death at his front door, apparently by an ex-convict, and a couple of months after Kaufman County Assistant District Attorney Mark Hasse was killed in a parking lot a block from his courthouse office. No arrests have been made in Hasse's slaying Jan. 31.

AP

Kaufman County Sheriff David Byrnes, center, walks away after a news conference in Kaufman, Texas, on Sunday March 31, 2013. On Saturday, Kaufman County District Attorney Mike McLelland and his wife, Cynthia, were murdered in their home.

McLelland, 63, is the 13th prosecutor killed in the U.S. since the National Association of District Attorneys began keeping count in the 1960s.

Sheriff David Byrnes would not give details Sunday of how the killings unfolded and said there was nothing to indicate for certain whether the DA's slaying was connected to Hasse's.

El Paso County, Colo., sheriff's spokesman Sgt. Joe Roybal said investigators had found no evidence so far connecting the Texas killings to the Colorado case, but added: "We're examining all possibilities."

Colorado's corrections director, Tom Clements, was killed March 19 when he answered the doorbell at his home outside Colorado Springs. Evan Spencer Ebel, a white supremacist and former Colorado inmate suspected of shooting Clements, died in a shootout with Texas deputies two days later about 100 miles from Kaufman.

McLelland himself, in an Associated Press interview shortly after the Colorado slaying, raised the possibility that Hasse was gunned down by a white supremacist gang.

The weekend slayings raised concerns for prosecutors across Texas, and some were taking extra security precautions. Byrnes said security would be increased at the courthouse in Kaufman but declined to say if or how other prosecutors in McLelland's office would be protected.

Harris County District Attorney Mike Anderson said he accepted the sheriff's offer of 24-hour security for him and his family after learning about the slayings, mostly over concerns for his family's safety. Anderson said also would take precautions at his Houston office, the largest one in Texas, which has more than 270 prosecutors.

"I think district attorneys across Texas are still in a state of shock," Anderson said Sunday.

McLelland, elected DA in 2010, said his office had prosecuted several cases against racist gangs, who have a strong presence around Kaufman County, a mostly rural area dotted with subdivisions, with a population of about 104,000.

"We put some real dents in the Aryan Brotherhood around here in the past year," he said.

In recent years, the DA's office also prosecuted a case in which a justice of the peace was found guilty of theft and burglary and another case in which a man was convicted of killing his former girlfriend and her 10-year-old daughter.

McLelland said he carried a gun everywhere, even to walk his dog around town, a bedroom community for the Dallas area. He figured assassins were more likely to try to attack him outside. He said he had warned all his employees to be constantly on the alert.

"The people in my line of work are going to have to get better at it," he said of dealing with the danger, "because they're going to need it more in the future."

The number of attacks on prosecutors, judges and senior law enforcement officers in the U.S. has spiked in the past three years, according to Glenn McGovern, an investigator with the Santa Clara County, Calif., district attorney's office who tracks such cases.

Senators caution immigration deal not final

WASHINGTON (AP)—Even with one of the largest hurdles to an immigration overhaul overcome, optimistic lawmakers on Sunday cautioned they had not finished work on a bill that would provide a path to citizenship for 11 million illegal immigrants.

The AFL-CIO and the pro-business U.S. Chamber of Commerce reached a deal late Friday that would allow tens of thousands of low-skill workers into the country to fill jobs in construction, restaurants and hotels. Yet despite the unusual agreement between the two powerful lobbying groups, lawmakers from both parties conceded that the negotiations were not finished.

"With the agreement between business and labor, every major policy issue has been resolved," said Sen. Chuck Schumer, the New York Democrat who brokered the labor-business deal.

But it hasn't taken the form of a bill and the eight senators searching for a compromise haven't met about the potential breakthrough.

"We haven't signed off," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.

"There are a few details yet. But conceptually, we have an agreement between business and labor, between ourselves that has to be drafted," he added.

Yet just before lawmakers began appearing on Sunday shows, Sen. Marco Rubio warned he was not ready to lend his name—and political clout—to such a deal without hashing out the details.

"Reports that the bipartisan group of eight senators have agreed on a legislative proposal are premature," said Rubio, a Florida Republican who is among the lawmakers working on legislation.

Rubio, a Cuban-American who is weighing a presidential bid in 2016, is a leading figure inside his party. Lawmakers will be closely watching any deal for his approval and his skepticism about the process did little to encourage optimism.

3 killed in 95-vehicle pileup at Virginia-NC line

GALAX, Va. (AP)—Nearly 100 vehicles crashed Sunday along a mountainous, foggy stretch of interstate near the Virginia-North Carolina border, killing three people and injuring 25 others.

Police said traffic along Interstate 77 in southwest Virginia backed up for about 8 miles in the southbound lanes after the accidents. Authorities closed the northbound lanes so that fire trucks, ambulances and police could get to the series of chain-reaction wrecks.

Virginia State Police determined there were 17 separate crashes involving 95 vehicles within a mile span near the base of Fancy Gap Mountain, spokeswoman Corinne Geller said. The crashes began around 1:15 p.m. Sunday when there was heavy fog in the area.

"This mountain is notorious for fog banks. They have advance signs warning people. But the problem is, people are seeing well and suddenly they're in a fog bank," said Glen Sage of the American Red Cross office in the town of Galax.

Since 1997, there have been at least six such pileups on the mountain but Sunday's crash was the most deadly, according to The Roanoke Times. Two people died in crashes involving dozens of vehicles in both 2000 and 2010.

Overhead message boards warned drivers since about 6 a.m. Sunday to slow down because of the severe fog, Geller said. The crashes were mostly caused by drivers going too fast for conditions.

At the "epicenter" was a wreck involving up to eight vehicles, some of which caught fire, Geller said. Photos from the accident scene showed a burned out tractor-trailer and several crumpled vehicles badly charred. Those taken to hospitals had injuries ranging from serious to minor.

School buses took stranded people to shelters and hotels.

Nina Rose, 20, and her mother, were driving home to Rochester, N.Y., when they encountered the pileup.

ACROSS THE NATION

3 feared dead as Alaska Troopers copter crashes

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—An Alaska State Trooper helicopter carrying a trooper, a pilot for the agency and a rescued snowmobiler crashed in the south-central part of the state, leaving the three aboard feared dead, a spokeswoman said Sunday night. Trooper spokeswoman Megan Peters said the aircraft went down Saturday night, the wreckage spotted Sunday, and no survivors have been found. Peters said that though the three are feared dead, there has been no confirmation of any fatalities.

4 hurt in crash, attack at California Wal-Mart

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)—Four people were hurt Sunday when a driver crashed his car into a Wal-Mart and then assaulted customers inside, officials said. The man hit two cars in the parking lot at about 11:15 a.m. with his red Oldsmobile Cutlass sedan then crashed through the storefront near the pharmacy and collided with a beer display before stopping, police and witnesses said. The unidentified driver then got out of his car and used a blunt object to attack people, San Jose police Officer Albert Morales said. The driver was arrested when officers arrived.

2 Nevada youth coaches charged in post-game fight

RENO, Nev. (AP)—Two Nevada youth football coaches are facing criminal charges in connection with a bloody fist fight in front of dozens of players and parents after a game in northeastern Nevada. The coaches are accused of "chest-bumping," punching and yelling obscenities at each other during the Oct. 16 midfield fight in the casino town of West Wendover along the Utah line. Prosecutors filed misdemeanor battery and disturbing the peace charges last week against Luis Perez, 53, and Frank Sanchez, 38, in West Wendover Justice Court. The fight stemmed from the final play of a game that involved 10- to 13-year-old boys and was won by Perez's team, police said.

Asia

Doomed US Navy ship removed from PH reef

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Workers in the southwestern Philippines have removed the last major part of a U.S. Navy minesweeper from a protected coral reef where it ran aground in January, and the damage will be assessed to determine the fine Washington will pay, officials said Sunday.

A crane lifted the 250-ton stern of the dismantled USS *Guardian* on Saturday from the reef, where it accidentally got stuck Jan. 17, officials said. The reef, designated a World Heritage site by UNESCO, the United Nations' cultural arm, is located in the Tubbataha National Marine Park in the Sulu Sea, about 644 kilometers (400 miles) southwest of Manila.

The doomed ship's parts will be transported to a Navy facility in Sasebo, Japan, to determine which ones can be reused and which will be junked, Philippine coast guard Commodore Enrico Efren Evangelista said.

Workers were cleaning debris at the site, where American and Filipino experts this week will begin a final assessment of the reef damage, to be paid for by Washington. An initial estimate showed about 4,000 square meters (4,780 square yards) of coral reef was damaged by the ship grounding, according to Tubbataha park superintendent Angelique Songco. She said it was unlikely the estimate would change significantly.

Songco said the fine would be about 24,000 pesos ($600) per square meter, so the U.S. could be facing a bill of more than $2 million.

The fine will go to a fund for the upkeep of the reef, Songco said, adding that Filipino and U.S. scientists will inspect the reef this week to determine the best way to "rehabilitate" the damaged parts. One option is to let the reef heal by itself, which would take a long time but be less complicated. Another option is to carry out some "repairs" to the reef, which would be more costly and complicated, she said.

Songco said her agency did not have plans to pursue charges against U.S. authorities over the incident.

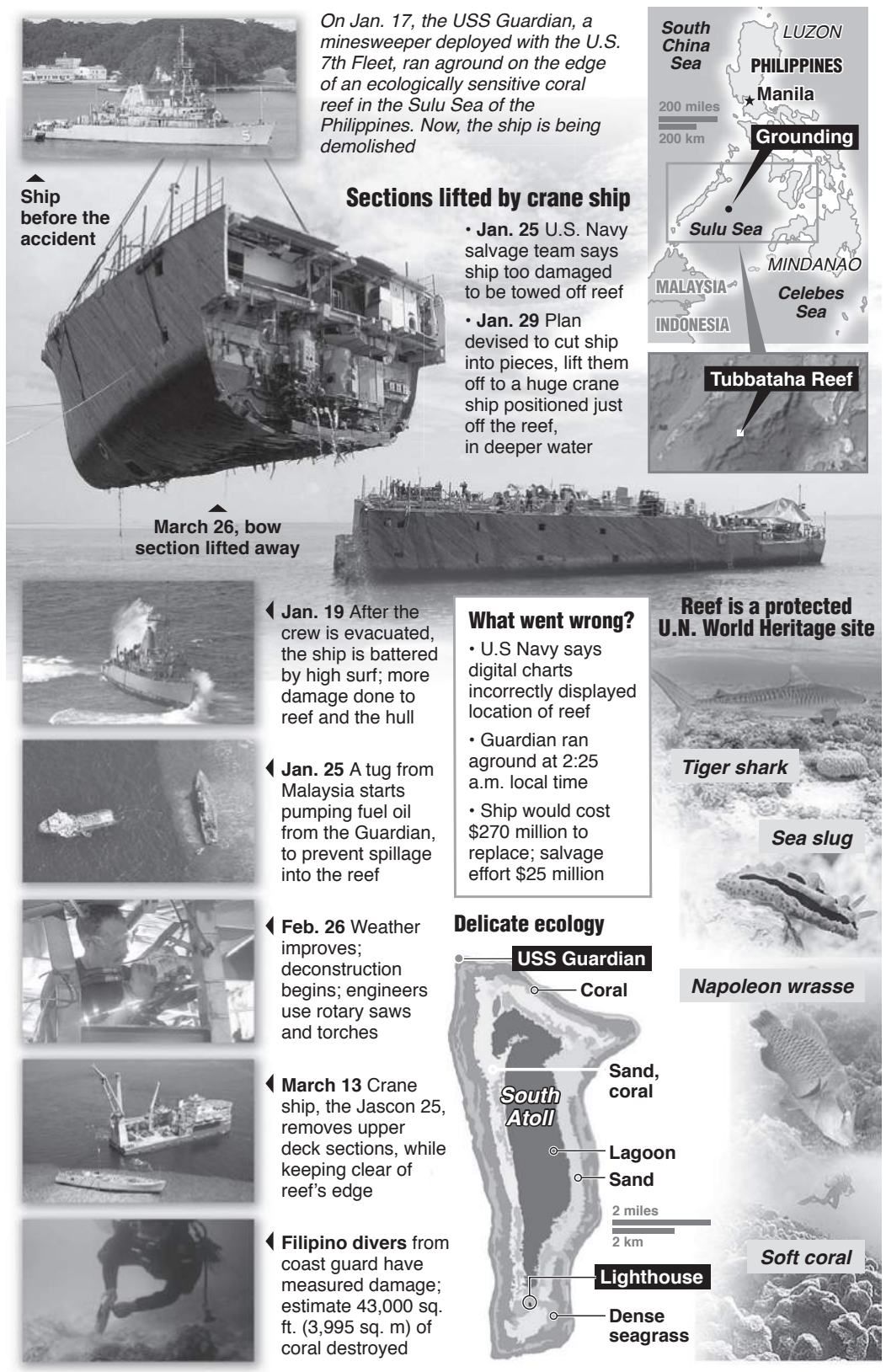
Asked if the Philippine government would press charges against U.S. Navy officials, Philippine Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr., a spokesman for President Benigno Aquino III, did not reply directly, but said, "There must be accountability and we will enforce our existing laws."

The warship's removal closes an embarrassing episode as Washington reasserts its presence in Asia amid China's rise. The Navy and the U.S. ambassador to Manila, Harry K. Thomas, have both apologized for the grounding and promised to cooperate with America's longtime Asian ally.

"As we have stated in the past, we regret this incident and the United States is prepared to pay compensation for the damage to the reef," the U.S. Embassy said in a statement, adding that it was cooperating with a Philippine government investigation of the incident.

A separate U.S. government investigation on the cause of the grounding has not yet been completed, the embassy said.

U.S. minesweeper cut apart to spare coral reef


On Jan. 17, the USS Guardian, a minesweeper deployed with the U.S. 7th Fleet, ran aground on the edge of an ecologically sensitive coral reef in the Sulu Sea of the Philippines. Now, the ship is being demolished
Ship before the accident
Sections lifted by crane ship
• Jan. 25 U.S. Navy salvage team says ship too damaged to be towed off reef
• Jan. 29 Plan devised to cut ship into pieces, lift them off to a huge crane ship positioned just off the reef, in deeper water
March 26, bow section lifted away
South China Sea
LUZON
PHILIPPINES
Manila
200 miles
200 km
Grounding
Sulu Sea
MINDANAO
MALAYSIA
INDONESIA
Celebes Sea
Tubbataha Reef
Jan. 19 After the crew is evacuated, the ship is battered by high surf; more damage done to reef and the hull
Jan. 25 A tug from Malaysia starts pumping fuel oil from the Guardian, to prevent spillage into the reef
Feb. 26 Weather improves; deconstruction begins; engineers use rotary saws and torches
March 13 Crane ship, the Jascon 25, removes upper deck sections, while keeping clear of reef's edge
Filipino divers from coast guard have measured damage; estimate 43,000 sq. ft. (3,995 sq. m) of coral destroyed
What went wrong?
• U.S Navy says digital charts incorrectly displayed location of reef
• Guardian ran aground at 2:25 a.m. local time
• Ship would cost $270 million to replace; salvage effort $25 million
Delicate ecology
USS Guardian
Coral
Sand, coral
South Atoll
Lagoon
Sand
2 miles
2 km
Lighthouse
Dense seagrass
Reef is a protected U.N. World Heritage site
Tiger shark
Sea slug
Napoleon wrasse
Soft coral

Source: U.S. Navy, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Stars and Stripes, gCaptain, World Wildlife Fund Graphic: Robert Dorrell © 2013 MCT

NKorea's parliament meets amid nuclear tension

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—After weeks of warlike rhetoric, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un gathered legislators Monday for an annual spring parliamentary session taking place one day after top party officials adopted a statement declaring building nuclear weapons and the economy the nation's top priorities.

The meeting of the Supreme People's Assembly follows near-daily threats from Pyongyang, including vows of nuclear strikes on South Korea and the U.S.

Pyongyang has reacted with anger over routine U.S.-South Korean military drills and a new round of U.N. and U.S. sanctions that followed its Feb. 12 underground nuclear test, the country's third. Analysts see a full-scale North Korean attack as unlikely and say the threats are more likely efforts to provoke softer policies toward Pyongyang from a new government in Seoul, to win diplomatic talks with Washington and to solidify the young North Korean leader's military credentials at home.

On Sunday, Kim and top party officials adopted a declaration calling nuclear weapons the "the nation's life" and an important component of its defense, an asset that wouldn't be traded even for "billions of dollars." Pyongyang cites the U.S. military presence in South Korea as a main reason behind its drive to build missiles and atomic weapons. The U.S. has stationed tens of thousands of troops in South Korea since the Korean War ended in a truce in 1953.

North Korea also has threatened in recent days to shut down a jointly run factory complex in the North - the last remaining symbol of inter-Korean rapprochement. But officials in Seoul say hundreds of workers traveled as usual across the heavily armed border to the North Korean factory Monday as they have throughout the rising tensions.

"I have no idea about what it will be like when I go to the North Korean side. It seems OK to be here, but we will be living there in a tense situation for a week," Kim Won-soo, a South Korean manager working in Kaesong, said before his departure Monday from Paju, South Korea.

While analysts call North Korea's threats largely brinkmanship, there is some fear that a localized skirmish might escalate. Seoul has vowed to respond harshly should North Korea provoke its military. Naval skirmishes in disputed Yellow Sea waters off the Korean coast have led to bloody battles several times over the years. Attacks blamed on Pyongyang in 2010 killed 50 South Koreans.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Bomb in Pakistan hits politician's convoy, kills 2

BANNU, Pakistan (AP)—Taliban militants attacked the election motorcade of a secularist-backed politician with a roadside bomb on Sunday, wounding him and killing two of his supporters, police and the militant group said. It was the latest attack by militants against figures associated with the Awami National Party. Both the ANP and the Taliban have strong support among ethnic Pashtuns who dominate Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the northwestern province in which the blast took place. It comes the day after a man armed with guns and grenades killed a school principal and ANP member in Karachi, a southern port city with a large Pashtun migrant community. Taliban spokesman Ahsanullah Ahsan claimed responsibility for the attack on Malik Adnan Wazir. "We have targeted Adnan Wazir's convoy for his support for the secular system and the secular party," he said in a phone call from an undisclosed location.

India's Hindu party elevates controversial leader

NEW DELHI (AP)—The main opposition Hindu nationalist party on Sunday elevated Narendra Modi, a deeply divisive figure in Indian politics, to the party's top decision-making bodies, with his supporters believing he could become prime minister in national elections next year. However, Rajnath Singh, the Bharatiya Janata Party president, did not name Modi as the party's prime ministerial candidate, apparently because of opposition from some allies. Smriti Irani, a BJP vice president, said the party would make a decision on the issue later. It is not known when the party will announce its candidate. The elections are due in May 2014.

Privately owned daily newspapers return to Myanmar

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—The newspaper industry might be shrinking in the rest of the world but it expanded Monday in Myanmar when privately run daily newspapers hit newsstands for the first time in 50 years.

For many people, the rebirth of daily papers is a novelty: Many weren't even born when the late dictator Ne Win imposed a state monopoly on the daily press in the 1960s.

But for 81-year-old Khin Maung Lay, it's like a second lease on life. He is chief editor of Golden Fresh Land, one of four dailies that went on sale Monday as Myanmar takes another step in its march toward democracy.

"We've been waiting half a century for this day," said the veteran editor, adding that the paper's initial print run of 80,000 copies was sold out by late morning. "It shows how much people long for private daily newspapers. This morning, I was in tears seeing this."

He's old enough to recall there once had been a big and vibrant daily press in the Burmese, English, Indian and Chinese languages in the period of parliamentary democracy after Myanmar, known then as Burma, won independence from Britain in 1948.

Khin Maung Lay worked as a senior newsman at the Burmese language Mogyo daily before it was driven out of business by government pressure in 1964.

Now as chief editor of *Golden Fresh Land*—the name sounds less awkward in the original Burmese—he heads a team of young journalists he recruited from various weeklies, journalists who have only the briefest of acquaintances with the concept of a free press, having grown up under the military government that ruled for five decades.

World

Pope makes Easter pleas for world peace

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Francis marked Christianity's most joyous day with a passionate plea for world peace, celebrating his first Easter Sunday as pontiff in the enthusiastic company of more than 250,000 people who overflowed from St. Peter's Square.

With eloquent words in his Easter message, Francis lamented enduring conflicts in the Middle East, on the Korean peninsula and elsewhere and remembered the world's neediest people. With physical gestures, he illustrated the personal, down-to-earth caring he brings as a pastor to this new papacy—cradling a disabled child held out to him in the crowd and delightedly accepting a surprise gift thrust at him.

Francis shared in his flock's exuberance as they celebrated Christianity's core belief that Jesus Christ rose from the dead following crucifixion. After Mass in flower-bedecked St. Peter's Square, he stepped aboard an open-topped white popemobile for a cheerful spin through pathways in the joyous crowd, kissing babies, smiling constantly and patting children on the head.

One admirer of both the pope and his favorite soccer team from his Argentine homeland, Saints of San Lorenzo, insisted that Francis take a team jersey he was waving at the pontiff—"take it, go ahead, take it," the man seemed to be telling the pope. Finally, a delighted Francis obliged, briefly holding up the shirt, and the crowd roared in approval. He handed the shirt to an aide in the front seat, and the popemobile continued its whirl through the square.

In a poignant moment, Francis cradled and kissed a physically disabled boy passed to him from the crowd. The child worked hard to make one of his arms hug the pope back, then succeeded, smiling in satisfaction as the pope patiently waited for the boy to give his greeting.

AP

Pope Francis kisses a baby after celebrating his first Easter Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican, Sunday, March 31, 2013.

Francis has repeatedly put concern for the poor and suffering at the center of his messages, and he pursued his promotion of the causes of peace and social justice in the Easter speech he delivered from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, the same vantage point above the square where he was introduced to the world as the first Latin American pope on March 13.

The Roman Catholic leader aimed his Easter greetings at "every house and every family, especially where the suffering is greatest, in hospitals, in prisons." Francis prayed that Jesus would inspire people to "change hatred into love, vengeance into forgiveness, war into peace."

As popes before him have, he urged Israelis and Palestinians to resume peace talks and end a conflict that "has lasted all too long." And, in reflecting on the two-year-old Syrian crisis, Francis asked, "How much suffering must there still be before a political solution" can be found?

Mandela in hospital on Easter

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—Former South African President Nelson Mandela had a restful day in a hospital Sunday and is improving following treatment for a recurrence of pneumonia, the government said.

The office of President Jacob Zuma thanked South Africans who prayed for 94-year-old Mandela at Easter church services this weekend, as well as people at home and around the world who showed their "love and support in various ways" for the anti-apartheid leader and his family.

Mandela

"We also thank foreign governments for their messages of support," Zuma's office said in a statement.

The government "is satisfied that the doctors are providing the former president with the best medical care possible to enable his recovery and comfort. They have reported a further improvement in his condition," the statement said.

Mandela was admitted to a Pretoria hospital near midnight Wednesday. It was his third trip to a hospital since December, when he was treated for a lung infection and also had a procedure to remove gallstones. Earlier in March, he spent a night in a hospital for what officials said was a scheduled medical test.

"The whole world must come together and pray for him," Zacheus Phakathi, a security guard, said Sunday at an outdoor service on a hill overlooking Johannesburg.

In Pretoria, the capital, Henry Hyar, a restaurant waiter, standing by a hospital where Mandela is believed to be, said it was unfortunate that Mandela could not be with his family at home during Easter.

"I'm not happy about it," Hyar said. "We're praying for him to get better as soon as possible."

On Saturday, Zuma's office reported that Mandela was breathing without difficulty after having a procedure to clear fluid in his lung area.

Mandela became South Africa's first black president in 1994 after elections were held, bringing an end to the system of white racist rule known as apartheid. After his release from prison in 1990, Mandela was widely credited with averting even greater bloodshed by helping the country in the transition to democratic rule.

Syria accuses rebels of setting fire to oil wells

BEIRUT (AP)—Heavy shelling in a neighborhood in the northern city of Aleppo sent civilians fleeing for their lives on Sunday, and the state news agency accused rebels trying to topple the government of setting fire to three oil wells.

Syria's civil war has battered the country's infrastructure and torn its social fabric. After more than two years of conflict, neither President Bashar Assad's regime nor the rebels fighting for his ouster appear close to victory.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said civilians were vacating the Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood of Aleppo under heavy shelling by government forces. Rebels took over parts of the neighborhood late last week and were still clashing with Assad's troops who are trying to push them out. The Observatory, which relies on a network of contacts inside Syria, said four people, including two children, were killed in the shelling.

In the east, the state news agency, SANA, said rebels had set fire to three oil wells in the province of Deir al-Zour, causing a daily loss of 4,670 barrels of oil and 52 cubic meters of natural gas. It accused "terrorists," the government's term for rebels, of setting the fires after fighting among themselves about how to divide the oil.

Rebels battling Assad have seized large areas of territory in Syria's oil-rich east, including a number of oil fields. Although they lack the ability to exploit them, their loss represents a setback to the cash-strapped government they are trying to overthrow.

SANA said rebels have burned a total of nine wells in recent months. The three set ablaze on Sunday are the only ones still burning.

Also on Sunday, the government and the opposition blamed each other for killing a group of people found dead near the Lebanese border.

The Observatory said the bodies of 11 people, including eight women, were found near the town of Talkalakh in Homs province. The group said they were killed when government forces stormed the area. But SANA blamed rebels for the "massacre," saying they stormed the area, killed 10 people and looted homes and shops.

In another development, the head of the Syrian opposition's umbrella body said the group's military chief planned to visit Arab countries to solicit military aid. The trip follows a declaration last week by the Arab League that its member nations have a "right" to aid the Syrian opposition. Mouaz al-Khatib, the head of the Syrian National Coalition, told the Qatari daily Al Sharq of Gen. Salim Idris's travel plans, but did not say which countries he would visit.

WORLD BRIEFS

Death toll in Tanzania building collapse at 30

ZANZIBAR, Tanzania (AP)—Tanzania's government says the death toll from a collapsed building in the country's largest city rose to 30 early Monday. Rescue workers have given up hopes of finding more survivors after the 16-story building in Dar es Salaam collapsed Friday morning. Only 17 people were pulled out of the rubble alive Friday. The building, which was about to be completed, did not have tenants. Most of those killed were laborers and people passing by. The dead included children who were playing soccer at a nearby playground. Witnesses say many construction workers are still missing.

12 killed in eastern Mexico bus crash

VERACRUZ, Mexico (AP)—Officials say a bus traveling on a mountain road collided with a truck in thick fog and plunged over a cliff, killing 12 people and injuring 14. The Veracruz state public safety department says the bus was traveling between the cities of Misantla and Xalapa when it hit the truck coming from the opposite direction Saturday night. The bus flipped several times and fell into a canyon about 300 feet (100 meters) deep. Several deadly bus crashes in Veracruz state have killed dozens of people in recent years. Last year, a truck trailer shook loose and crashed into a bus of farmworkers, killing more than 40.

Egyptian TV satirist released after questioning

CAIRO (AP)—Egypt's most popular television satirist, who every week skewers the Islamist president and hard-line clerics on his Jon Stewart-style show, was released on bail Sunday but could face charges of insulting the country's leader and Islam. Bassem Youssef is the most prominent critic of President Mohammed Morsi to be called in for questioning in recent weeks, in what the opposition says is a campaign to intimidate critics amid wave after wave of political unrest in deeply polarized Egypt. Arrest warrants have been issued for five prominent anti-government activists accused of instigating violence. Deputy chief prosecutor Hassan Yassin denied the nearly five-hour interrogation was part of an intimidation campaign and said his department was enforcing the law and seeking to establish some guidelines on freedom of expression.

Focus

AP

Hal Hargrave Jr., who is paralyzed from the neck down after a car crash when he was 17, chats with his trainer Chris Fitzgerald as he gets ready for his physical therapy session at a gym in Claremont, Calif., Wednesday, Dec. 19, 2012. After years of grueling physical therapy, Hargrave started the nonprofit Be Perfect Foundation and raised $2 million to help other young people who couldn't afford the same kind of rehabilitation program made available to him.

Paralyzed ex-athlete's foundation helping others

By JOHN ROGERS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CLAREMONT, Calif. (AP)—As he rolls through the front door of the sprawling Claremont Club fitness center and shouts a friendly hello here and there, for just a moment it's as if nothing has changed since Hal Hargrave Jr. was the big, friendly teenage gym rat who haunted this place.

The burly Hargrave's head was filled with dreams of playing college baseball as he strode into the gym, stretched out on a bench and pressed 300 pounds above his body. Again and again.

He's still big and burly, his arms still muscular and he still works out nearly every day. Only these days Hargrave uses that strength to move his wheelchair in and out of the gym, where he still works out 20 hours a week and knows just about everybody in the place.

These days, though, Hargrave's goal is to get walking again, something he lost the ability to do on July 26, 2007, when he swerved his truck to avoid debris in the road. It flipped four times, the cab collapsing on him and snapping his spine. It left him paralyzed from the neck down.

The irony is never lost on Hargrave that he was delivering handicapped-accessible bathroom doors as part of a summer job. If it was a sign to a strapping 17-year-old athlete that his life was headed in the wrong direction, it would seem to have been a particularly harsh one, but Hargrave doesn't see it that way.

"Some people call me crazy for putting it this way, but I have been given a gift," the talkative, friendly 23-year-old says with a smile over lunch at the gym's small cafe. "They see this as an ailment. I don't."

He sees it instead as something that gave him a chance to help others, to have his life truly make a difference.

It inspired him to create the Be Perfect Foundation, a nonprofit charity that has raised $1.2 million to provide wheelchairs, make homes more accessible and, most importantly, keep more than 100 people in rehabilitation programs they otherwise couldn't afford.

All of which would have been pretty impressive if Hargrave had just stopped there. But he didn't.

He persuaded the Claremont Club president to turn a racquetball court and a basketball court into a wing for people with paralyzing injuries. Then he got Project Walk, a spinal rehabilitation center where he'd been treated, to open its first franchise in this bucolic college town 35 miles east of Los Angeles for those who couldn't make the commute to its San Diego area headquarters.

"Here's a 17-year-old boy who had a debilitating, life-changing accident," said Mike Alpert, who runs the Claremont Club and whose daughter has known Hargrave since the two were in kindergarten. "So many people that go through that would give up. Would be depressed. Would blame everybody else. Here's a young man who just said, `I have a calling to change the world and to help people through what's happening to me. And then he goes out and does it! How special is that?"

"He's an amazing young man," echoes Devorah Lieberman, president of University of La Verne, where Hargrave is a full-time student.

Although he hasn't regained full use of his fingers (he fist bumps rather than shakes hands), he's gotten back enough to take notes on his iPad. He maintains a near-perfect 3.8 grade point average.

Lieberman will never forget the first time they met two years ago at a basketball rally. Hargrave, never known to be shy, rolled up and introduced himself. He told her how he'd been hurt and she expressed her condolences.

"And he said to me, `DO NOT be sorry! It was a blessing.'"

Then he gave her a Be Perfect bracelet that she wears to this day.

Not that the road back from the accident was easy.

"It was very touch and go the first two weeks," recalled his father, Hal Hargrave Sr., who still chokes up when he talks about what his son has overcome and accomplished. "They had him on breathing machines. He got pneumonia. ... We didn't know if he was going to stay with us or not."

Hargrave himself thought he would die as he lay trapped in the truck. Those stories about your life passing before you, he says, are true.

Although he's big and strong again, nerve damage keeps his body in a near perpetual state of motion, giving the impression he's fidgeting uncomfortably in his chair although he really feels little.

Given only a 1 to 3 percent chance of walking again, he threw himself into rehabilitation with the same fervor that once made him a high school sports star. Gradually movement returned to his shoulders, then his arms and hands. Lately he's started to get some in his legs as well.

"It's nothing that's too controlled movement yet, but it's coming back and I'm doing things that doctors are in disbelief about," he says happily.

It was after one of his arduous rehabilitation sessions, where limbs are yanked and twisted and bodies are placed in expensive machinery to simulate walking, that an epiphany led to his foundation.

Brian O'Neil, an electrician who had suffered a similar injury in a dirt-bike crash, told him he wouldn't see him again. He'd lost his job, was about to lose his house, didn't have insurance and couldn't afford any more rehabilitation.

Before he left the center, Hargrave persuaded his father to pick up the cost of O'Neil's rehabilitation. Then, on the ride home, he decided why not help others as well?

He was told that running a foundation wouldn't be easy, especially for a guy going through his own grueling rehabilitation. But he was adamant.

"He didn't like the word no. And he didn't like the word can't," Hargrave Sr. says, chuckling at the memory of raising the oldest of his four children.

O'Neil was blown away—and still is.

"For such a young man he's very—I can't even find the words to mention the kind of guy Little Hal is," O'Neil, using the nickname close friends call Hargrave by, says emotionally. "He's just a great kid."

Hargrave scheduled the first of what would become annual fundraisers at the height of the Great Recession and he hoped he might get lucky and raise maybe $30,000. After $250,000 poured in, he thought: "Maybe we can do this forever."

So he soldiers on, getting up each day, working out, running the foundation, hanging out with friends, going to school. Still a sports fanatic, he's earning a degree in communications with the hope of someday becoming a sports broadcaster.

But the foundation will always come first.

"I had dreams of going off and going to school and becoming a baseball player and doing this and that," he says as he finishes lunch. "But when I think back on it, it was so selfish. And now my dreams are much different. My dreams are to keep people in therapy and my dreams are to help other people. That's what my life is about at this point."

AP

Hal Hargrave Jr., who is paralyzed from the neck down after a car crash when he was 17, leaves after his workout in Claremont, Calif., Wednesday, Dec. 19, 2012.

Overdrive

Jeep takes a radical new turn with Cherokee

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP AUTO WRITER

The 2014 Jeep Cherokee Trail Hawk is driven over obstacles as its presented at the New York International Auto Show, in New York's Javits Center, Wednesday, March 27, 2013. AP

DETROIT (AP)—The Jeep Cherokee is back, with a surprising design that could win some new buyers but lose some old fans.

The 2014 Cherokee midsize SUV makes its debut Wednesday at the New York International Auto Show. The remake is so radical that observers might not realize it's a Jeep.

The new Cherokee ditches Jeep's traditional boxy look for a more aerodynamic style. It replaces the brand's signature round headlights with sharply angled slits. The interior is plush and full of luxury options like automatic parallel parking. Even Jeep's seven-slat grille didn't go untouched - it's much smaller and creased in the middle to fold over the Cherokee's nose.

It's a look more reminiscent of a Honda CR-V than the model it replaces—the Liberty—and past Cherokees that helped establish Jeep as a symbol of toughness and off-road adventure.

All this isn't sitting well with some Jeep fans, who say the 72-year-old brand is straying too far from its rugged, utilitarian roots. They bemoan the new styling and softer ride, saying it's more suited for a trip to the mall than the Rubicon trail.

"It's the ugliest thing I've ever seen on the road and to put a Jeep badge on it, let alone call it a Cherokee, is an insult to the name and heritage that Jeep has always delivered," says Micah Myers, a longtime Jeep fan from Lexington Park, Md., who drives a 13-year-old Cherokee.

Chrysler Group, Jeep's parent, acknowledges that the design is polarizing. But Jeep needs to win back the suburbanites who have spent the last decade defecting to a newer batch of car-like, fuel-efficient competitors like the Chevrolet Equinox and Toyota RAV4. The new Cherokee goes on sale this fall.

In 2002, after Jeep replaced the aging Cherokee with the cheaper, smaller Liberty, a record 171,212 were sold in the U.S., according to Ward's AutoInfoBank. Last year that fell to 75,482. The CR-V outsold the Liberty by more than three to one.

"They need to do something different, and that kind of vehicle is something different altogether," says Michelle Krebs, a senior analyst at the car-buying site Edmunds.com. "They have to stretch that brand."

Jeep - and other automakers—are also under pressure to meet increasing U.S. fuel economy requirements. That explains the aerodynamic style and the new nine-speed transmission under the hood. The all-wheel-drive Liberty currently gets 22 miles per gallon on the highway, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, making it one of the worst performers among midsize SUVs. The new Cherokee will get up to 31 mpg on the highway.

Finally, Jeep needs the SUV to appeal to customers around the world, not just adventurous types. The Cherokee will be built in Toledo, Ohio, but exported to more than 150 countries, including China.

"We wanted a design that is fluid and efficient yet still rugged and looks at home on the trail or at the theater," said Mark Allen, Jeep's design chief.

The Cherokee first went on sale in 1974, when Jeep was still owned by American Motors Corp. In 1984, American Motors released a new Cherokee that was smaller, narrower and lighter than the original, essentially inventing the sport utility vehicle. Sales soared. More than 100,000 Cherokees were sold each year between 1986 and 2001. Off-roaders were big fans because of the Cherokee's capability.

In 2001, Jeep's new owner, Chrysler, revamped the SUV again. It changed the name to Liberty, which tested better in focus groups and helped attract new buyers. The Liberty initially sold well, but then struggled as the midsize SUV market got more crowded and Chrysler—which went through bankruptcy in 2009—invested little money in it.

Krebs says bringing back the Cherokee name makes sense, since it fits neatly under its larger sibling, the Grand Cherokee SUV. It will also save Chrysler money, since the vehicle has always kept the Cherokee name in international markets.

But purists complain that the plush new model is nothing like Cherokees of old. For one thing, it shares a car underbody with Chrysler's Italian partner, Fiat SpA, instead of a platform designed for off-roading. Nearly 900 fans have already "liked" a Facebook petition asking Chrysler not to call the new SUV a Cherokee.

David Silecchia, who has owned three Cherokee XJs from 1988, 1998 and 2000, thinks the 2014 Cherokee will sell, but not to rock-climbing adventurers like him.

"Jeep now seems to want to appeal to the people who go to the mall, throw a bunch of shopping bags in the back, drive home and read a book," said Silecchia, a student and information technology worker in Georgia. "The 2014 Cherokee is a nice vehicle, don't get me wrong, but not a suitable "rebirth" of the Cherokee name."

Chrysler insists that the new Cherokee can capably tackle rough terrain. It has more low-gear power for towing and climbing steep grades than the 2001 Cherokee. At 184 horsepower, the base, four-cylinder engine is slightly less powerful than the 2001 Cherokee's base V6, but it's much more efficient. The new Cherokee also offers a 271-horsepower V6. The new Cherokee can tow up to 4,500 pounds, which is more than any other vehicle its size but about 500 pounds less than the 2001 version.

A Trailhawk edition of the new Cherokee carries Jeep's "trail rated" badge, which means it can handle a series of challenging off-road conditions, including fording water.

Dave Sullivan, an analyst with the consulting firm AutoPacific, says the higher-priced, fully-loaded versions of the Cherokee should be very capable. But he thinks the drastic redesign will cost Jeep some loyalists.

Jeep, like Toyota, has been successful partly because its design changes are usually subtle, Sullivan says. The two-door Jeep Wrangler, for instance, has changed little since it went on sale in 1987, but it's by far the best-selling small SUV in the U.S.

"This is not an edgy brand. It should not be about spending money on outrageous design," he said. "It's all about the off-road design and capability."

Hot Wheels: BMW unveils new diesel 3-Series sedan

By TOM KRISHER
AP AUTO WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—BMW is giving fans of its 3-Series more room and better gas mileage in two important variations of the small luxury sports sedan that it's rolling out at the New York International Auto Show this week.

On Wednesday, the German automaker will formally unveil a new 3 Series Gran Turismo, which has a bigger distance between the front and rear wheels to create more rear-seat legroom and cargo space in the trunk. The company also will unveil the 328d in the U.S., a 3-Series equipped with a diesel engine that should get more than 40 miles per gallon on the highway.

The 3-Series is the top-selling luxury car in the U.S. BMW sold almost 99,000 3-Series sedans, coupes, and wagons last year, up more than 6 percent from 2011. Luxury automakers overall sold more than 1 million cars in the U.S. last year, an increase of almost 12 percent over 2011.

The Gran Turismo will be available in the fall at U.S. dealers, while the 328d will arrive at showrooms later this year.

Here are the highlights of the two vehicles:

UNDER THE HOOD: The Gran Turismo has the same engines and transmissions as the standard 3-Series: a 2-liter four-cylinder engine or a 3-liter inline 6-cylinder. All-wheel-drive is standard. The 328d will have a four-cylinder turbocharged diesel engine that puts out 180 horsepower. BMW says the car can go from zero to 60 in about 7.2 seconds.

OUTSIDE: The Gran Turismo has a sloped back and tailgate, and is 4.3 inches longer between the front and rear wheels than a standard 3-Series sedan. The 328d looks the same as the standard 3-Series except for a diesel badge.

INSIDE: The 328d's interior will look similar to the standard 3-Series, while the five-passenger Gran Turismo will have a little more back-seat legroom and a trunk that's one cubic foot larger than the regular 3-Series.

GAS MILEAGE: BMW says preliminary estimates show the diesel model gets 45 mpg on the highway. City mileage estimates weren't available. The Gran Turismo should get about what a standard 3-series gets: up to 36 mpg on the highway with a manual transmission and a four-cylinder engine and 33 mpg on the highway with the six cylinder motor and automatic transmission.

PRICE: About $40,000 to start for the diesel. The Gran Turismo 328i starts at just over $42,300. A 320i now starts at just under $33,000, while a 335i begins at just over $45,000.

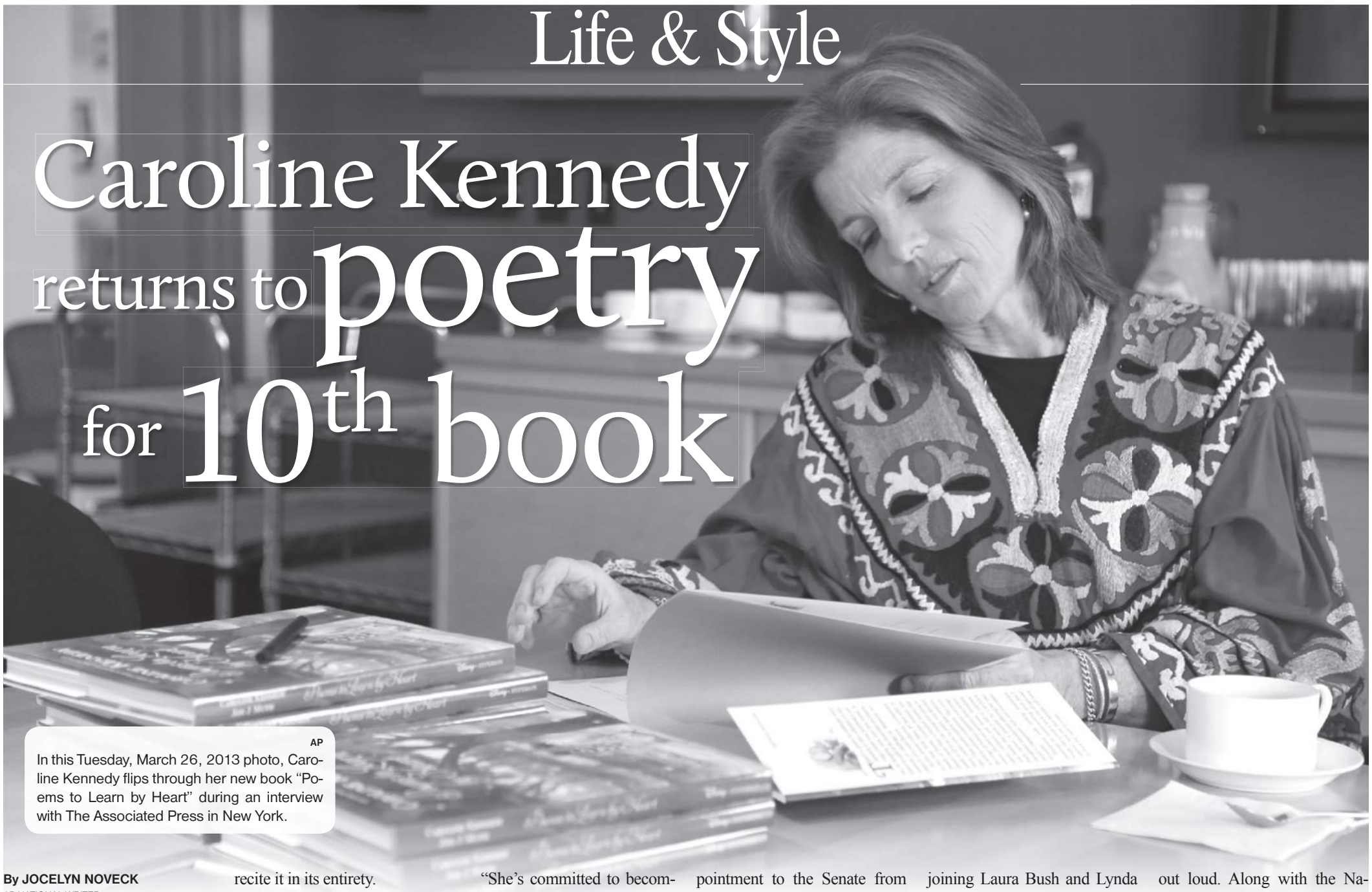
CHEERS: The 328d brings great gas mileage and performance to the 3-Series, which already was strong in both categories. The Gran Turismo 328i promises a more comfortable ride for passengers on longer trips.

JEERS: The diesel and the Gran Turismo are pricey compared to some of the standard models.

This photo provided by BMW shows the new BMW 3 Series Gran Turismo, one of two important variations of its popular 3-Series small luxury sports sedans. AP

Life & Style

Caroline Kennedy returns to poetry for 10th book



AP

In this Tuesday, March 26, 2013 photo, Caroline Kennedy flips through her new book "Poems to Learn by Heart" during an interview with The Associated Press in New York.

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Beginning work a few years ago on her latest book, an anthology of poems for young people, Caroline Kennedy found herself looking through one of her mother's scrapbooks. She burst into laughter, she says, as she came across a poem that her brother John, as a youngster, had picked out and copied as a gift to their poetry-loving mom.

"Willie with a thirst for gore, Nailed his sister to the door," went the poem, by an unknown author. "Mother said with humor quaint, `Careful, Willie, don't scratch the paint!'"

The poem "brought back memories of our relationship," Kennedy told a bookstore audience this week. "I laughed so hard."

But for Kennedy, now 55 and a mother of three grown children, there's a deeper meaning to that irreverent ditty. Poetry was a central part of her home life growing up. She and John regularly copied out and illustrated poems for their mother, Jackie, upon birthdays and Mother's Days. Sometimes, they'd recite them too, "if we were feeling competitive." And at family gatherings with their grandmother, there were frequent challenges to recite Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's famous (and famously lengthy) "Paul Revere's Ride." Only Uncle Ted, it seems, was able to recite it in its entirety.

Now, with her 10th book, Kennedy wants to share with young readers the love for the written word that she feels her poetry-filled childhood helped instill in her (even though her own son, she quips, hates reading and only likes two poems.) Hence the title: "Poems to Learn By Heart."

"It was a combination of remembering my own childhood and thinking about gifts I'd been given," she said in an interview last week at her husband's downtown Manhattan design firm, explaining the genesis of the latest book. "And working in schools and seeing the role that poetry can play in kids' lives."

It's also an effort to promote literacy, a cause Kennedy has supported in a number of ways. "Fourteen percent of American adults can't read," Kennedy says. "It's a slow-motion disaster." She believes poetry can help. "Kids need a way in," she says, "and reading needs to be fun. Poetry can give them that—with the current emphasis on poetry slams, and these other open mic events. That's actually why I think poetry has a chance."

Kennedy's current book—a collection of poems from various authors, with introductions by her to each section, and vivid illustrations by John J Muth—is her fourth to focus on poetry. Her earlier books, especially "The Best Loved Poems of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis," have been huge sellers, pulling in numbers unheard of for poetry anthologies.

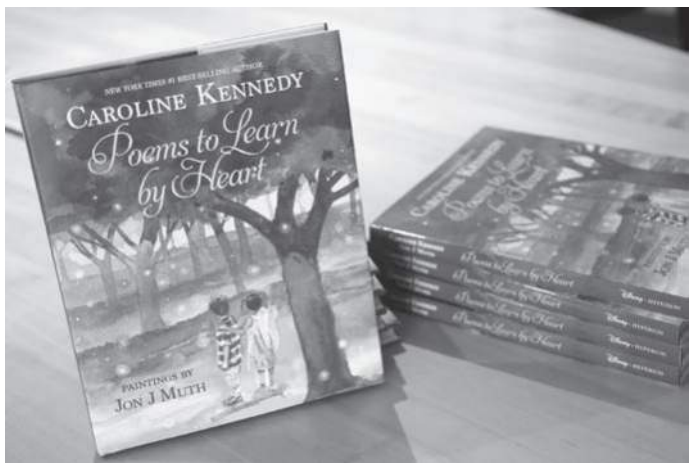
"She's committed to becoming an advocate for the written word and poetry in particular," says Gretchen Young, who edited all of Kennedy's poetry books at Hyperion, working with the author to cull down huge numbers of beloved poems. "And she knows she can do that."

As to what else Kennedy can do with her high profile - and the unique and powerful celebrity status she's held since she was a little girl in the Kennedy White House - that is a question that people never cease to ask. The latest rumor has her up for an ambassadorship, perhaps to Japan, perhaps to Canada. Asked about those rumors during a recent TV appearance, she responded with typical restraint: "I'd love to serve in any way." She added that she hadn't been asked yet, and her response is still "No comment."

But many expect Kennedy, who considered seeking an appointment to the Senate from New York in 2009 but then withdrew her name from contention amid a flurry of publicity, to take up some high-profile position in the near future. She was an important and avid supporter of President Barack Obama, both in the 2008 and the 2012 elections.

"I'm really glad he's president," she says now when asked how he's doing, giving him high marks particularly in the field of education. "He can't do all the things he'd like to. We have a lot of problems. That's why I want young people to get engaged."

For now, though, Kennedy is making her mark in different ways. She is president of the John F. Kennedy Library Association, and in May will present the Profile in Courage award to former Arizona congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. She still participates in fundraising activities for the New York City public schools, and is joining Laura Bush and Lynda Bird Johnson Robb to help the Library of Congress promote literacy through a new awards program, along with other authors, publishers and scholars.



AP

In this Tuesday, March 26, 2013 photo, copies of Caroline Kennedy's new book "Poems to Learn by Heart" sit on display during an interview with The Associated Press in New York.

Another pet project: Libraries, which she says are still critical places for young people to learn analytical skills. She's the honorary chair of National Library Week next month. "I'm into things that are dying out," she quips, then adds that actually they're not: "My son goes to the library all the time (at college.) There's a lot more socializing at the library than you think."

And she hints that she'll be writing other books, though not on poetry. "I think I'm pretty much done with the poetry books," she says. "I haven't figured out the next thing yet."

In any case, her attention to poetry has been a boon for all poets, says Stephen Young, program director at the Poetry Foundation, based in Chicago. "Selling poetry is, for most poets, a challenge," Young says. "It certainly helps when someone like Caroline Kennedy, who has an earnest and genuine interest in poetry, puts together these anthologies."

And while many might think that in this world of tweets and texts, the art of poetry is slowly dying out, the truth is that it seems to be on the upswing among young people, Young says—partly because of poetry slams and the like, but also due to the Internet. "People can read AND listen to poems on the Web," Young notes.

And clearly, kids like to recite out loud. Along with the National Endowment for the Arts, the poetry foundation sponsors Poetry Out Loud, a contest similar to the National Spelling Bee. In 2006, there were 40,000 participants. This year's contest, which will hold its finals in Washington, D.C., in April, has 375,000, Young says.

It all speaks, in his view, to the fact that "poems are meant to be shared." Kennedy says this too; In her book, along with more famous poems, she includes "Voices Rising," a collaborative poem by students on the "slam team" at DreamYard Prep, a Bronx school Kennedy became familiar with in her work with public schools. Those students contributed ideas to the book, and three of them recited their poem together at Kennedy's kickoff reading last week at Barnes & Noble in New York.

Speaking of young people, Kennedy asked each of her own three kids—Rose and Tatiana, who have finished college, and Jack, who is still there—to contribute a favorite poem to her new book. (Tatiana, the "bookworm" according to her mother, translated a poem from Ovid's Metamorphoses, from the original Latin.) But she herself has trouble picking her favorite.

Asked by an audience member at her book reading to do just that, though, she settled on "Don't Worry if Your Job is Small."

"Don't worry if your job is small, and your rewards are few," it says.

"Remember that the mighty oak, was once a nut like you."

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Friday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:35
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:35
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Monday & Thursday		4:05	7:05	

Cast: Saoirse Ronan, Max Irons, Jake Abel
Genre: Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

Synopsis
When a body-snatching alien infiltrates a group of human rebels and takes over the soul of Melanie (played by Saoirse Ronan), it begins to feel bits of her personality coming through in this Inferno adaptation of the best-selling novel from Twilight's Stephenie Meyer.

Tyler Perry's Temptation

Friday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:45
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:45
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Monday & Thursday		4:10	7:10	

Cast: Jurnee Smollett-Bell, Vanessa Williams
Genre: Drama • Rated PG 13

G.I. Joe: Retaliation 3D

Friday	1:25		7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:25		7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:25		7:25	
Monday & Thursday			7:25	

Cast: Dwayne Johnson, Bruce Willis, Channing Tatum
Genre: Action • Rated PG 13

G.I. Joe: Retaliation 2D

Friday		4:25		
Saturday		4:25		
Sunday		4:25		
Monday & Thursday		4:25		

Cast: Dwayne Johnson, Bruce Willis, Channing Tatum
Genre: Action • Rated PG 13

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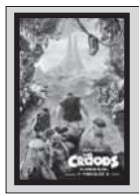
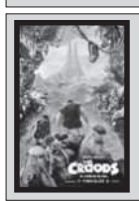


The Croods 3D

Friday	1:15		7:15	
Saturday	1:15		7:15	
Sunday	1:15		7:15	
Monday & Thursday			7:15	

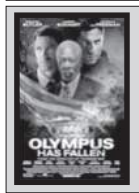
Cast: Emma Stone, Nicolas Cage, Ryan Reynolds
Genre: Children's/Family • Rated PG



The Croods 2D

Friday	4:15		9:30
Saturday	4:15		9:30
Sunday	4:15		
Monday & Tuesday	4:15		

Cast: Emma Stone, Nicolas Cage, Ryan Reynolds
Genre: Children's/Family • Rated PG



Olympus Has Fallen

Friday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:55
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:55
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Monday & Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Cast: Gerard Butler, Morgan Freeman, Aaron Eckhart
Genre: Action • Rated R

Oz The Great and Powerful 3D

Friday	1:00		7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00		7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00		7:00	
Monday & Thursday			7:00	

Cast: James Franco, Rachel Weisz, Michelle Williams
Genre: Fantasy • Rated PG

Oz The Great and Powerful 2D

Friday	4:00	
Saturday	4:00	
Sunday	4:00	
Monday & Tuesday	4:00	

Cast: James Franco, Rachel Weisz, Michelle Williams
Genre: Fantasy • Rated PG

Jack The Giant Slayer 2D

Friday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:50
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:50
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Monday & Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Cast: Nicholas Hoult, John Kassir, Ewan McGregor
Genre: Fantasy • Rated PG 13

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'G.I. Joe' commands No. 1 at box office with $41M

LOS ANGELES (AP)—After a nine-month delay, "G.I. Joe: Retaliation" deployed to the top spot at the box office.

The action film starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Bruce Willis and Channing Tatum as the gun-toting military toys brought to life marched into the No. 1 position at the weekend box office, earning $41.2 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. "Retaliation" opened Wednesday at midnight, which helped bring its domestic total to $51.7 million.

Paramount postponed the sequel to 2009's "G.I. Joe: Rise of Cobra" last May from its original June opening date to convert the film to 3-D. The last-minute switcheroo came just weeks after "Battleship," another movie based on a Hasbro toy, sank at the box office. At that time, Paramount already began its advertising campaign for "Retaliation."

"It certainly vindicates the decision," said Don Harris, the studio's head of distribution. "Any time you make those sorts of moves, people always assume the worst. The truth is I'd seen this movie a long time ago in 2-D, and the movie worked in 2-D. It's not trying to be `Schindler's List.' This movie is intended to be enjoyed as a big, action spectacle."

Internationally, Harris said "Retaliation" earned $80.3 million, making it the biggest international opening of the year. The film opened in 53 markets outside of the U.S. and Canada, including Russia, South Korea and Mexico.

After debuting in the top spot last weekend, the 3-D animated prehistoric comedy "The Croods" from DreamWorks Animation and 20th Century Fox slipped to the No. 2 spot with $26.5 million in its second weekend. The film features the voices of Nicolas Cage, Emma Stone and Catherine Keener as a cave family on the hunt for a new home.

Among the other new films this weekend, "Tyler Perry's Temptation" starring Jurnee Smollett-Bell and Lance Gross opened above expectations at No. 3 with $22.3 million, while the sci-fi adaptation "The Host" featuring Saoirse Ronan, Max Irons, and Jake Abel as characters from the Stephenie Meyer novel landed at No. 6 in its debut weekend with a modest $11 million.

AP
Dwayne Johnson, a cast member in "G.I. Joe: Retaliation," poses at the Los Angeles premiere of the film at the TCL Chinese Theatre on Thursday, March 28, 2013 in Los Angeles.

1. **"G.I. Joe: Retaliation,"** $41.2 million ($80.3 million international).
2. **"The Croods,"** $26.5 million ($52.5 million international).
3. **"Tyler Perry's Temptation,"** $22.3 million.
4. **"Olympus Has Fallen,"** $14 million.
5. **"Oz the Great and Powerful,"** $11.6 million ($22.2 million international).
6. **"The Host,"** $11 million ($6 million international).
7. **"The Call,"** $4.8 million.
8. **"Admission,"** $3.2 million.
9. **"Spring Breakers,"** $2.7 million.
10. **"The Incredible Burt Wonderstone,"** $1.3 million.

Estimated weekend ticket sales at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada) for films distributed overseas by Hollywood studios, according to Rentrak:

1. **"G.I. Joe: Retaliation,"** $80.3 million.
2. **"The Croods,"** $52.5 million.
3. **"Jack the Giant Slayer,"** $25.2 million.
4. **"Oz the Great and Powerful,"** $22.2 million.
5. **"Dragon Ball Z: Kami to Kami,"** $7 million.
6. **"The Host,"** $6 million.
7. **"Identity Thief,"** $5.5 million.
8. **"Wreck-It Ralph,"** $4 million.
9. **"A Good Day to Die Hard,"** $3.6 million.
10. **"Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters,"** $3.3 million.

CBS halts replays of basketball player's injury

NEW YORK (AP)—After two initial replays, CBS stopped showing footage Sunday of Louisville basketball player Kevin Ware breaking his leg during the first half of his team's NCAA men's tournament game against Duke.

The injury during the nationally televised game, and the shocked reaction of Ware's fellow players, called to mind the gruesome broken leg suffered by Washington Redskins quarterback Joe Theismann in a Monday Night football game in 1985. During Sunday's game, Theismann tweeted his best wishes to Ware.

Ware had leaped to try and block a shot by Duke's Tyler Thornton. His leg landed awkwardly, buckled and flopped as he fell to the ground. The first hint that the injury was out of the ordinary came from Thornton, who put his hands to his face and had an anguished look as he ran back on defense.

CBS commentator Clark Kellogg described the injury was "gruesome."

"If you can bear to watch it, take a look but it's a gruesome-looking injury," Kellogg said.

CBS showed the replay twice in slow motion, although not with a close-up of Ware landing. The network also never showed a close-up of the injury.

CBS then concentrated on reaction shots. Three of Ware's teammates were on the ground near the basket. Wayne Blackshear cried, Chane Behanan knelt on his hands and knees and Peyton Silva sat, a hand covering his mouth.

The network aired a close-up of medical officials working on Ware, showing the player only from the face up.

CBS Sports Chairman Sean McManus said that because of the graphic nature of the injury, the network decided not to show it after the original replays. People could quickly find replays on YouTube, anyway.

"We did not zoom in on the injury when he was taken off," McManus said. "We did not try to highlight it. I think we did the right thing."

At halftime, Greg Gumbel noted that CBS would not show the injury. Its highlight package again focused on the reactions, including Louisville coach Rick Pitino wiping away tears.

AP
Louisville's Peyton Siva, left, Chane Behanan, center, and Wayne Blackshear (20) react to Kevin Ware's injury during the first half of the Midwest Regional final in the NCAA college basketball tournament, Sunday, March 31, 2013, in Indianapolis.

Sounds of strike ending come from SF Symphony

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The sound of silence from the San Francisco Symphony appeared to be coming to an end as a tentative agreement was reached Sunday to end a 2 1/2-week strike.

The symphony announced in a statement that its negotiators and leaders of the musicians' union have agreed to terms on a 26-month contract, subject to the approval of the full orchestra and the symphony's Board of Governors. No details on the terms would be released before the contract was ratified, the symphony statement said.

Symphony leaders are planning for musicians to return to the stage at Davies Symphony Hall for a series of performances for schoolchildren starting Tuesday, and Thursday and Friday night concerts featuring performances of pieces by Handel and Mozart are back on the schedule, the statement said.

Four local concerts were canceled because of the strike. A four-performance East Coast tour that included stops at Carnegie Hall in New York and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. was also scrapped.

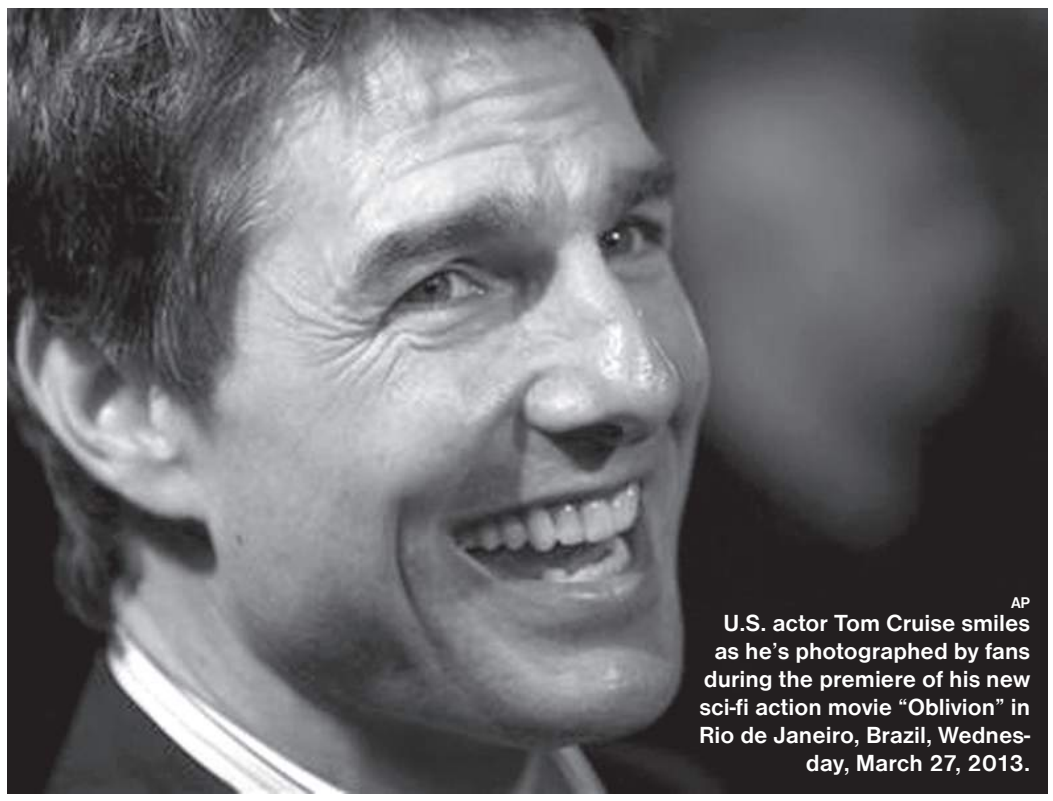
Tom Cruise makes visit to Maracana Stadium

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—Tom Cruise took time off from promoting his latest movie in Brazil by visiting Maracana Stadium and meeting former Brazilian soccer star Zico.

Cruise posed for photos at the stadium's newly installed field holding a Brazil jersey with his name on the back.

The actor told Globo TV it "would be an honor" to make it to the 2014 World Cup final at the famed venue. He received an autographed ball from Zico, and said he would message friend David Beckham about his meeting with the former Brazilian playmaker, saying the British star would be "jealous."

The Maracana, which also hosted the 1950 World Cup final, is being renovated ahead of next June's Confederations Cup, the warm-up tournament a year before soccer's showcase event



AP

U.S. actor Tom Cruise smiles as he's photographed by fans during the premiere of his new sci-fi action movie "Oblivion" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Wednesday, March 27, 2013.

Study shows Shakespeare as ruthless businessman

LONDON (AP)—Hoarder, moneylender, tax dodger—it's not how we usually think of William Shakespeare.

But we should, according to a group of academics who say the Bard was a ruthless businessman who grew wealthy dealing in grain during a time of famine.

Researchers from Aberystwyth University in Wales argue that we can't fully understand Shakespeare unless we study his often-overlooked business savvy.

"Shakespeare the grain-hoarder has been redacted from history so that Shakespeare the creative genius could be born," the researchers say in a paper due to be delivered at the Hay literary festival in Wales in May.

Jayne Archer, a lecturer in medieval and Renaissance literature at Aberystwyth, said that oversight is the product of "a willful ignorance on behalf of critics and scholars who I think—perhaps through snobbery—cannot countenance the idea of a creative genius also being motivated by self-interest."

Archer and her colleagues Howard Thomas and Richard Marggraf Turley combed through historical archives to uncover details of the playwright's parallel life as a grain merchant and property owner in the town of Stratford-upon-Avon whose practices sometimes brought him into conflict with the law.

"Over a 15-year period he purchased and stored grain, malt and barley for resale at inflated prices to his neighbors and local tradesmen," they wrote, adding that Shakespeare "pursued those who could not (or would not) pay him in full for these staples and used the profits to further his own money-lending activities."

He was pursued by the authorities for tax evasion, and in 1598 was prosecuted for hoarding grain during a time of shortage.

The charge sheet against Shakespeare was not entirely unknown, though it may come as shock to some literature lovers. But the authors argue that modern readers and scholars are out of touch with the harsh realities the writer and his contemporaries faced.

He lived and wrote in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, during a period known as the "Little Ice Age," when unusual cold and heavy rain caused poor harvests and food shortages.

AP

This is a Monday March 9, 2009 file of a then newly discovered portrait of William Shakespeare, presented by the Shakespeare Birthplace trust, is seen in central London, New research depicts William Shakespeare as a grain hoarder, moneylender and tax dodger who became a wealthy businessman during a time of famine.

"I think now we have a rather rarefied idea of writers and artists as people who are disconnected from the everyday concerns of their contemporaries," Archer said. "But for most writers for most of history, hunger has been a major concern—and it has been as creatively energizing as any other force."

She argues that knowledge of the era's food insecurity can cast new light on Shakespeare's plays, including "Coriolanus," which is set in an ancient Rome wracked by famine. The food protests in the play can be seen to echo the real-life 1607 uprising of peasants in the English Midlands, where Shakespeare lived.

Shakespeare scholar Jonathan Bate told the Sunday Times newspaper that Archer and her colleagues had done valuable work, saying their research had "given new force to an old argument about the contemporaneity of the protests over grain-hoarding in `Coriolanus.'"

Archer said famine also informs "King Lear," in which an aging monarch's unjust distribution of his land among his three daughters sparks war.

"In the play there is a very subtle depiction of how dividing up land also involves impacts on the distribution of food," Archer said.

Archer said the idea of Shakespeare as a hardheaded businessman may not fit with romantic notions of the sensitive artist, but we shouldn't judge him too harshly. Hoarding grain was his way of ensuring that his family and neighbors would not go hungry if a harvest failed.

"Remembering Shakespeare as a man of hunger makes him much more human, much more understandable, much more complex," she said.

"He would not have thought of himself first and foremost as a writer. Possibly as an actor—but first and foremost as a good father, a good husband and a good citizen to the people of Stratford."

Rep: Glee's Monteith heads to rehab

NEW YORK (AP)—"Glee" star Cory Monteith is heading to rehab.

In a statement, Monteith's rep confirmed Sunday night that the actor has "voluntarily admitted himself to a treatment facility for substance addiction.

"He graciously asks for your respect and privacy as he takes the necessary steps towards recovery."

People first reported the news on its website.

This is not the 30-year-old's first time in rehab. He got treatment when he was 19 and previously has spoken about his addiction struggles, saying he had a serious problem and took just "anything and everything."

He told Parade in 2011 that he was "lucky to be alive."

Monteith stars as Finn Hudson on the Fox show. He dates his co-star, Lea Michele. She told People that she loves and supports Monteith and is proud he's going to rehab.

In this Aug. 19, 2012 file photo, Cory Monteith attends the 2012 Do Something awards in Santa Monica, Calif. Monteith is heading to rehab, according to People.

AP

Woman with luxuriant locks wants them to stay that way

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My hair falls nearly to my waist, and I go to great lengths to maintain it and keep it free of split ends.

Many of my friends, both male and female, have grown out their hair over the years and donated it to cancer charities. While I think it's a beautiful act of selflessness, I have never felt the calling to donate my hair.

I have recently been criticized for wanting to keep my long hair for myself and have been called selfish and a hypocrite. Abby, cancer runs in my family. I donate money and volunteer for my local Relay for Life every year. When I explain this to my "attackers"—some of them good friends—they look the other way and say I'm "horrible" because I won't cut my hair and give it to those in need.

I cut my hair very short 10 years ago and regretted it. Now I'm feeling pressured to do it again. How do I get my message across to these people without sounding defensive or snobby?

RAPUNZEL IN MICHIGAN

DEAR RAPUNZEL: I think I detect a twinge of jealousy in the "good friends" who imply you are being selfish or hypocritical for not donating your lovely locks. It would be neither defensive nor snobby to smile and reply: "We all must decide for ourselves how we will support the charities that are important to us. I have chosen to donate in other ways."

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have been with my boyfriend, "Keoni," for five years. We have a healthy relationship. However, when we go out to the grocery store, the doctor's office or the mall, women constantly question his ethnicity, which is Hawaiian. Then, without fail, they'll proceed to tell him (and me) how handsome, beautiful or gorgeous he is.

Keoni does nothing to make me feel less than pretty myself, but these frequent comments from strangers have started to make me feel insecure about my own appearance. How do I accept these compliments without resentment?

KEONI'S GIRLFRIEND IN FLORIDA

DEAR GIRLFRIEND: What may be upsetting you is that these women ask your boyfriend inappropriate questions and appear to be coming on to him. Face it, your boyfriend is exotic. If you were in Hawaii, he wouldn't be exotic—YOU might be. The next time this happens and someone raves about his good looks, remember that Keoni's with you, not her. But if she's pushy, "suggest" she move to Hawaii and get "lei-ed."

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Are hugs the new handshake? I am encountering more and more people who, instead of shaking hands when they see you (or say goodbye), want to hug. I understand it if you are close friends, but frequently it's a business acquaintance.

The two most recent examples were when I went to meet with my mother's minister to arrange her funeral. I had never met the man, but he wanted to hug upon meeting me. Yesterday, I saw a new eye doctor for the first time. As I was leaving, I put out my hand to shake his. He said, "Oh, I like to hug!" When I stepped back and told him, "I'm not a huggy person," he seemed offended. Any suggestions?

STANDOFFISH SUE

DEAR SUE: The minister may have thought that having just lost your mother, you could have used the hug. Many people welcome that kind of comfort. Personally, I agree that the eye doctor's behavior was presumptuous. If you continue to patronize him, my recommendation is to stand out of reach.

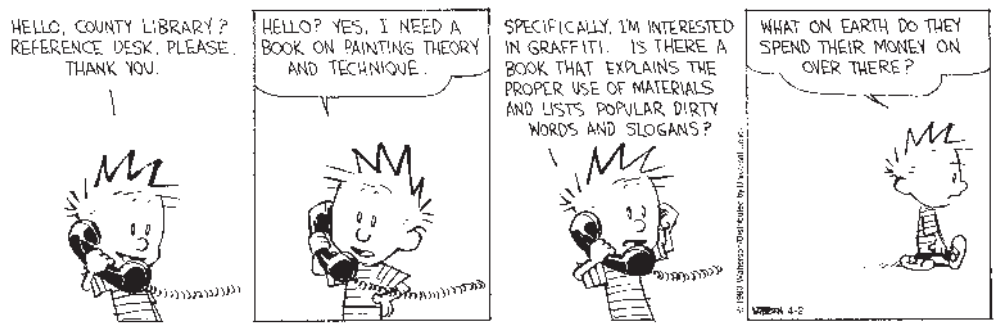
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HELLO, COUNTY LIBRARY? REFERENCE DESK, PLEASE. THANK YOU.
HELLO? YES, I NEED A BOOK ON PAINTING THEORY AND TECHNIQUE.
SPECIFICALLY, I'M INTERESTED IN GRAFFITI. IS THERE A BOOK THAT EXPLAINS THE PROPER USE OF MATERIALS AND LISTS POPULAR DIRTY WORDS AND SLOGANS?
WHAT ON EARTH DO THEY SPEND THEIR MONEY ON OVER THERE?

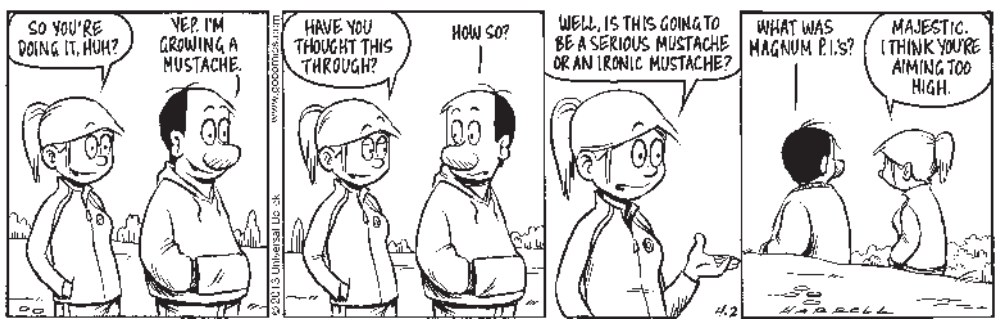
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

"IF SPACE ALIENS WERE TO INVADE EARTH, THEY COULD TAKE THE FORM OF ANIMALS"
HAVE YOU COME IN PEACE?
TAKE ME TO YOUR REFRIGERATOR
JIM DAVIS 4-2

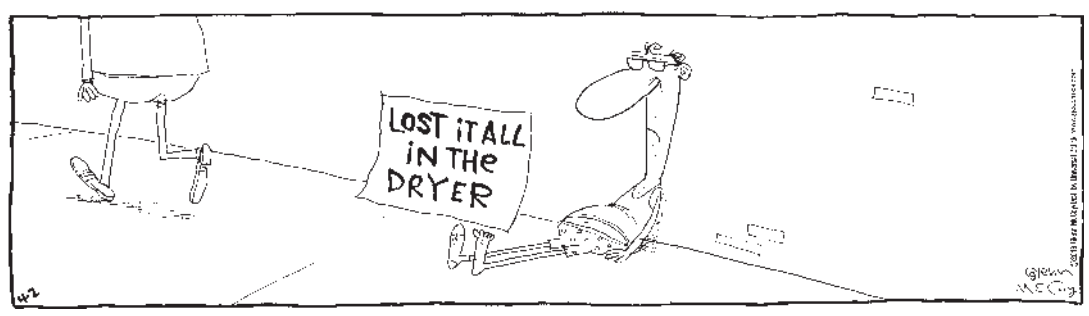
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


SO YOU'RE DOING IT, HUH?
YEP. I'M GROWING A MUSTACHE.
HAVE YOU THOUGHT THIS THROUGH?
HOW SO?
WELL, IS THIS GOING TO BE A SERIOUS MUSTACHE OR AN IRONIC MUSTACHE?
WHAT WAS MAGNUM P.I.'S?
MAJESTIC. I THINK YOU'RE AIMING TOO HIGH.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

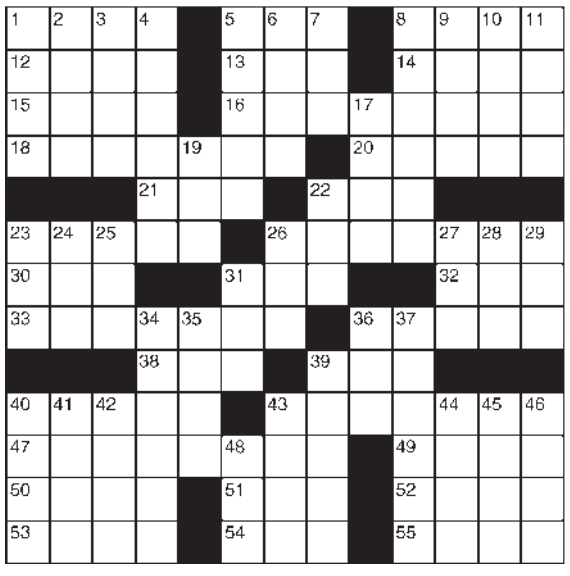
ACROSS
1 Periodicals, for short
5 Cistern
8 Last writes
12 Guitarist Clapton
13 Brewery product
14 Infamous Roman
15 Genesis maker
16 Fan of classical music
18 Barbershop job
20 Stir up
21 Get on in years
22 Lubricate
23 Synagogue VIP
26 Hew
30 Swelled head
31 Write in the margins
32 Pod denizen
33 On the — (secretly)
36 Caulking material
38 A billion years
39 2,000 pounds
40 Angry dog's sound
43 Sleazy sort
47 Throughout your time
49 Rewrite, maybe
50 Satan's specialty
51 Oklahoma city
52 Antitoxins
53 Trawler gear
54 Three-pointers in football (Abbr.)
55 Back talk

DOWN
1 Netting
2 Vicinity
3 Leslie Caron role
4 Sacred beetle
5 Price
6 Greatly
7 Roman X
8 Waiting for the operator
9 Suitor
10 Eye part
11 Ripped
17 Sandlike matter
19 Modern film trickery
22 Chic no more
23 Scarlet
24 In earlier times
25 Violinist's need
26 Calf's mom
27 Choose, with "for"
28 Drenched
29 Aye opponent
31 "The Daily Show With — Stewart"
34 Staircase posts
35 Lounge around
36 "Bam!"
37 Except if
39 Forum garb
40 Singer Campbell
41 Split apart
42 "Think nothing —"
43 Takeoff's opposite (Abbr.)
44 Concept
45 Some evergreens
46 Greek vowels
48 Lummox

Solution time: 21 mins.

S	E	T	S	■	A	F	T	■	E	S	S	E
L	U	R	E	■	L	O	Y	■	U	P	O	N
A	R	I	A	■	S	C	R	A	G	L	I	O
V	O	O	D	O	O	■	O	N	E	I	L	L
■	■	■	O	G	R	E	■	T	N	T	■	■
S	C	R	G	E	A	N	T	■	E	P	C	C
P	R	E	■	E	N	D	O	W	■	E	A	R
A	R	C	H	■	S	E	R	E	N	A	T	A
■	■	H	A	P	■	D	E	L	I	■	■	■
P	H	A	R	O	S	■	A	T	M	O	S	T
S	E	R	V	I	C	E	D	■	B	R	A	Y
S	A	G	E	■	A	G	O	■	L	A	N	K
T	R	E	Y	■	N	O	R	■	E	L	S	E

Yesterday's answer 4-2



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18– only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Michael Fassbender, 36; Christopher Meloni, 52; Emmylou Harris, 66; Linda Hunt, 68

Happy Birthday: Your strategy must be well-thought-out before you make a move. Positive action will allow you greater freedom. Refuse to let emotional matters slow you down or come between you and your goals. Secrets will be divulged that can cost you financially. Impatience will be your enemy. Your timing will be crucial. Romance is highlighted. Your numbers are 4, 16, 20, 28, 31, 34, 44.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Keep an open mind. Refrain from making an impulsive move. Stick close to home and keep a close eye on what and who is most important to you. Romance is in the stars, but emotional problems will surface if jealousy prevails. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Pick up information and study your findings before you make a move or contact anyone in a position of authority. Running your plans by someone you are close to will help you make the right decision. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Take part in events that will increase your chance of making new acquaintances or business connections. Don't be afraid to show off your skills, but refrain from making a financial donation. It's what you do physically that will impress. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Follow through. Don't let anyone stand in your way. Believe in who you are and what you are capable of accomplishing. Your memory and expertise will not let you down. Refuse to let an emotional matter slow you down. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You'll stand out in a crowd. Take any opportunity you get to show off your talent. Take care of personal responsibilities quickly so you don't miss a chance to network and collaborate with people in key positions. Love and romance look promising. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Take a closer look at your relationships with the people you deal with daily. Protect your money from anyone you feel may be in your life to take advantage of what you have to offer. Pay more attention to self-improvement. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Hasty decisions regarding partnership matters will lead to regrets. Sit back and observe what everyone around you is doing. If you base your next move on pertinent facts, you will expand your awareness of the possibilities that are within reach. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Size up your situation and make your next move with authority. A powerful presence will result in a much better chance to reform, resolve or implement what you want. Your vision will be crystal clear. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Stick close to home. Fixing up your place or getting to the bottom of any situation involving the people you live with will bring positive results. Don't let an outsider upset what you are trying to achieve. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Emotional matters between you and a friend, relative or neighbor will escalate if you are too pushy or give in to the pressure being put on you. Keep your distance and concentrate on your responsibilities and job-related expectations. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Revisit old ideas, friends and hobbies. Make alterations to fit today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, and you'll turn something from your past into an auspicious new beginning. Don't shy away from something because you don't know where to start. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Listen to your inner voice, and you will know how to make the most of a potential opportunity. Contracts, settlements or any pending problems can be dealt with and put behind you. New adventures prevail once you've cleared your timetable. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are passionate, expressive and energetic. You are emotional and impatient.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

					2	3		4
		1		3				
	7				9			1
			2		4	5		6
	2			6			8	
7		9	3		8			
2			8				3	
				9		1		
6		8	5					

Difficulty Level ★★ 4/02

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	9	3	2	1	7	4	8	6
4	1	2	6	8	5	3	7	9
7	6	8	3	9	4	5	2	1
9	2	4	7	6	8	1	5	3
3	5	7	4	2	1	9	6	8
6	8	1	5	3	9	7	4	2
8	3	5	9	7	2	6	1	4
1	4	6	8	5	3	2	9	7
2	7	9	1	4	6	8	3	5

Difficulty Level ★ 4/01

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

BABY RUTH CANDY BARS **Solution: 9 letters**

E	C	E	L	T	S	E	N	P	R	O	D	U	C	T
M	R	N	O	U	G	A	T	P	Y	E	H	S	A	R
R	L	U	G	S	M	S	E	O	T	O	E	W	R	A
G	E	A	T	E	D	A	S	S	B	T	D	E	A	D
R	R	C	P	X	N	D	A	I	A	E	V	E	M	E
O	M	O	I	U	I	O	A	R	T	L	A	T	E	M
V	I	C	T	P	R	M	D	A	I	Ⓡ	N	N	L	A
E	L	O	B	K	E	Y	N	S	T	Ⓔ	U	E	O	R
R	K	A	C	R	H	E	S	I	C	Ⓓ	T	C	G	K
O	R	A	I	O	G	R	F	N	Y	L	T	E	A	E
S	N	C	B	O	O	I	E	A	R	W	Y	I	C	R
S	A	R	R	V	C	T	T	T	E	O	E	P	I	N
N	A	D	A	I	S	W	H	I	T	E	C	H	H	E
C	Y	L	A	A	S	Y	H	C	N	U	R	C	C	L
H	F	L	T	R	E	P	P	A	R	W	B	L	U	E

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Adds, American, Artificial, Bars, Bean, Blue, Butter, Caramel, Carbohydrates, Chewy, Chicago, Cocoa, Corn Syrup, Crisp, Crunchy, Curtiss, Flavor, Grover, Hydrogenated, Kernel, Milk, Mixture, Name, Nestle, Nougat, Nutty, Palm, Peanut, Piece, Product, Recipe, Red, Roasted, Silver, Snack, Soy, Sugar, Sweet, Taste, Trademark, White, Wrapper

Yesterday's Answer: Morning

CLASSIFIED ADS

EMPLOYMENT

1 Commercial Cleaner $5.55/hr. Mail resume to C & H Saipan, Inc. P.O. Box 501608, Saipan, MP 96950.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Lower Navy Hill Apts. 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Unit approximately 600sq.ft. Nightime security. $450/mo. Call for an appointment 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. $450-$550/mo. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/8 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 1-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. $250/mo. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/8 or 285-1317.

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. $600/mo. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. $550. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

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No phone calls please.

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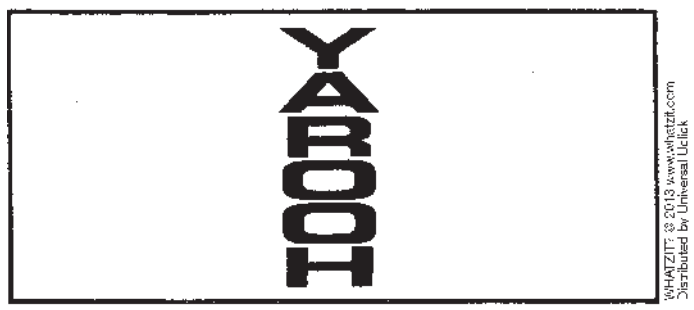

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Astros strong in AL debut, top Rangers

AP

Houston Astros' Erik Bedard delivers a pitch against the Texas Rangers during the ninth inning of a season-opening baseball game at Minute Maid Park, Sunday, March 31, 2013, in Houston.

HOUSTON (AP)—The Houston Astros and their spiffy new uniforms looked like a perfect fit in the American League.

Rick Ankiel and the Astros made an impressive debut in the AL, trouncing the Texas Rangers 8-2 Sunday night in the major league opener and giving Bo Porter a win in his first game as manager.

"To come out with a win is perfect," Astros designated hitter Carlos Pena said. "To be part of it is really cool. To play our rivals here in Texas and to come out on top today, it's a treat."

Ankiel launched a pinch-hit three-run shot for the majors' first homer this season, Bud Norris pitched well for the win and Erik Bedard threw 3 1-3 scoreless innings for his first career save.

Having switched from the National League to the AL in the offseason, the Astros earned their first opening day victory since 2006 and the 4,000th regular-season win in franchise history.

The Astros are coming off consecutive 100-loss seasons and has the lowest payroll in the majors, prompting many to predict they will be the worst team in the majors. But Houston opened in style wearing uniforms that brought back the orange and blue of old-school Astros teams.

After the game, rapper Drake's rags-to-riches hit "Started from the Bottom" played on a loop in the clubhouse. Houston, which has finished last in the majors each of the last two seasons, decided the song would be its postgame music after wins this season.

Justin Maxwell added a pair of triples and made a nifty catch in center field.

Norris (1-0) allowed five hits and two runs with five strikeouts in 5 2-3 innings. He was one of five Astros making their first opening day start on baseball's second-youngest team.

"To sit at 1-0 right now feels pretty darn good, and we've just got to go back out there on Tuesday and play some more baseball," Norris said.

Bedard shut down the Rangers on one hit the rest of the way for his first save in a 10-season career.

Porter, who at 40 is baseball's youngest manager, insisted all spring that this team would be much better than last season.

"It's more about the concepts that we've implemented," Porter said. "They do a great job with the information we provide and it allows them to play with confidence and allows them to play fast."

As Houston began a new era with the move to the AL, the Rangers were embarking on a new chapter without 2010 AL MVP Josh Hamilton. Along with Hamilton's departure to the Angels, Texas also lost catcher Mike Napoli and infielder Michael Young.

The loss snapped a streak of four straight opening day victories by the Rangers. Former Astros star Lance Berkman had two hits in his first game as Texas' designated hitter.

"I think there have been some people who have been disparaging in their analysis of their talent level, but this is the major leagues, and any team is capable of beating any other team on a given night," Berkman said.

He isn't worried about their offense coming around.

"If you look at the back of our baseball cards, I think we're pretty stinking good," he said.

Matt Harrison (0-1), who signed a $55 million contract this offseason, yielded six hits and five runs and tied a career high with nine strikeouts in 5 2-3 innings.

Maxwell's two-out triple in the fourth inning broke a scoreless tie and gave Houston a 2-0 lead. The ball bounced off the wall in left field and scored Brett Wallace and Carlos Pena, who both got on with singles. Umpires reviewed the play to make sure it wasn't a home run, and upheld the call.

An error by right fielder Nelson Cruz let Houston score a run in the fifth, and Jose Altuve singled home another.

Harrison put runners at first and second with walks in the sixth and was replaced by Derek Lowe with two outs. Ankiel, the one-time pitcher with St. Louis, connected on his fifth career pinch-hit homer, a full-count shot to right field that made it 7-2.

Norris had a tough second inning and had to use 26 pitches to escape, striking out Mitch Moreland. Norris got on a roll from there, retiring nine of the next 10 batters.

Norris ran into trouble in the sixth when Ian Kinsler drew a walk and Berkman hit a one-out single. Murphy's two-out single sent Kinsler home to make it 4-1. Cruz followed with a groundball single that rolled just out of reach of diving shortstop Ronny Cedeno to score Berkman and chase Norris.

Chants of "Cruuuuuuuz" filled the stadium, indicating the large number of Rangers fans who made the 250-mile trip from Dallas. Norris was replaced by Erik Bedard, who is Houston's fifth starter, but won't be needed for a while in the rotation because of off-days.

Santana set for season-ending surgery

NEW YORK (AP) - Johan Santana's season is over after New York Mets manager Terry Collins announced Santana is to undergo season-ending surgery on a torn capsule in his throwing shoulder on Tuesday.

Collins isn't surprised by Santana's belief that he can resume his career. The Mets manager views Santana as a true gamer.

"No, not with him," Collins told the Star-Ledger on Saturday. "The one thing everybody kind of forgot is the competitiveness in this guy. And he's not done. So I'm sure that's why he's doing it."

Team physician David Altchek, who performed the first procedure, will perform the second torn capsule surgery on Santana in 31 months.

"It's very difficult. If anybody can do it, it would be Johan," Mets pitching coach Dan Warthen told reporters. "We wish him luck and we feel sick about what's happened."

David Wright agrees with Collins and Warthen. He expects Santana to pitch again.

"I've known Johan long enough to know that I don't think that he'd want to go out like that. He's going to probably work just as hard, if not—if it's possible—work harder, to come back from this. I wouldn't be surprised at all if I see him pitch again," Wright said after the Mets lost to Baltimore 7-1 in their exhibition finale.

2013 is the final guaranteed year of Santana's six-year, $137.5 million deal. Santana is owed $25.5 million in 2013 and the Mets could choose to exercise a team buyout for $5.5 million in the offseason.

In four years with the Mets, Santana has a 46-34 record with an ERA of 3.18 in 109 appearances for the Mets.

Openers feature Strasburg, rivalries, AL versus NL

KANSAS CITY (AP)—The Kansas City Royals have been absent from the playoffs since the day Billy Butler was born. They've barely had a winning season in the last two decades. They've often lost 100 games in a year.

And yet, buoyed by the best record in spring training, hope abounds - for the Royals, for most everybody putting on a big league uniform.

"There's no reason we shouldn't be better," said Butler, the Royals' All-Star slugger. "How much better that is? I'm not a mind reader. I'm not a projector."

Ah, opening day.

The hot dogs taste better, the boxscores mean more and most every team thinks it's just a break or two away from reaching the World Series.

A dozen games were set for Monday across the majors. Star pitchers Justin Verlander, Stephen Strasburg and Adam Wainwright try to get off to great starts, old rivalries are renewed at Yankee Stadium and Dodger Stadium, and a quirky interleague schedule unfolds.

No snow is in the forecast for any ballpark on April Fools' Day, but freezing temperatures are expected at Target Field in Minnesota when Verlander and the AL champion Tigers take on the Twins.

"It's going to be cold but I've pitched in that kind of weather before," Verlander said. "I don't think about it. It's always cold in Detroit on opening day."

The season started Sunday night in Houston when the Astros, who shifted from the National League to the American League during the winter, beat the Texas Rangers 8-2. Astros righty Bud Norris threw a called strike to Ian Kinsler to begin the year, and Houston's Jose Altuve singled for the first hit.

Long the site of baseball's traditional opener, Cincinnati was going to have a new look Monday. That's when Josh Hamilton and his new Los Angeles Angels teammates visit Cincinnati in the first interleague matchup this season.

The Astros' move left 15 teams in each league, meaning an AL vs. NL matchup most every day this season.

"It is very strange," Reds manager Dusty Baker said.

On both coasts, there was a very familiar look - Red Sox-Yankees and Giants-Dodgers.

Mariano Rivera was set for his final opening day when the banged-up Yankees hosted Boston. The New York closer is among several big names who missed most or even all of last year—Troy Tulowitzki, Victor Martinez and John Lackey are in that group.

Injured stars Derek Jeter, Alex Rodriguez, Curtis Granderson and Mark Teixeira won't be in pinstripes for the first pitch.

"It's still the Yankees, it's still going to be a good lineup," Boston starter Jon Lester said Sunday. "They're missing a few of their big guys but anybody that fills in for them, it's like what I said, they're going to put professional at-bats together and still - it's not going to be a walk in the park."

No easy decisions, either, for Boston manager John Farrell, one of six new skippers in the majors this year.

At Dodger Stadium, Matt Cain starts for the World Series champion San Francisco Giants when they play Los Angeles in the century-old rivalry.

It will mark the 64th season at the microphone for Dodgers announcer Vin Scully. Heck, Tigers manager Jim Leyland seems like a mere pup by comparison, now starting his 50th year in pro ball.

All-Star shortstop Hanley Ramirez is sidelined for the Dodgers. Around the majors, third basemen Chase Headley of San Diego, David Freese of St. Louis and Brett Lawrie of Toronto will begin the season on the disabled list.

Mets third baseman David Wright plans to be in the lineup at Citi Field to take on San Diego. He hurt his ribcage at the World Baseball Classic.

"I feel good physically," Wright said. "It would have been nice to have maybe a few more at-bats toward the end, but I didn't have that luxury."

On Tuesday, there are two more openers - Baltimore at Tampa Bay, and Cleveland at revamped Toronto.

All 30 teams will pay tribute to the 20 children and six adults killed last December at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. Players, managers, coaches and umpires will wear a memorial patch through Tuesday that includes the seal of Newtown, a black ribbon and 26 stars, and there will be a moment of silence at each stadium.

Seven weeks after teams broke out the bats and balls, players seemed ready to get going.

"I'm really prepared. Well, finally spring training is over, it was a long one," Seattle ace Felix Hernandez said Sunday, a day before his start in Oakland.

"It's another season. We're a different team. It's always special, opening day, not for me but for all the guys," he said.

Final Four is set after blowouts, surprises

ATLANTA (AP)—An inspired Louisville squad vs. the surprising Shockers.

A new group of Fab Wolverines vs. the stingiest zone defense in college basketball.

After a weekend of blowouts and another upset, the Final Four is set.

Top overall seed Louisville will face Wichita State at the Georgia Dome next Saturday, while Michigan takes on Syracuse in the other national semifinal. The winners advance to the April 8 championship.

On Sunday, the Cardinals drew inspiration from a gruesome injury to guard Kevin Ware and cruised past Duke 85-63 in the Midwest Regional. Michigan led from the opening tip, routing Florida 79-59 in the South.

A day earlier, Syracuse shut down Marquette 55-39 to win the East. Wichita State punched its Final Four ticket with a 70-66 upset of Ohio State out West.

In the final year of the Big East before it splits into two new conferences, Louisville and Syracuse provided a fitting send-off to a league that quickly became a basketball powerhouse after it was founded in 1979.

Before it goes, this version of the Big East has a shot at one more national title.

With two teams, no less.

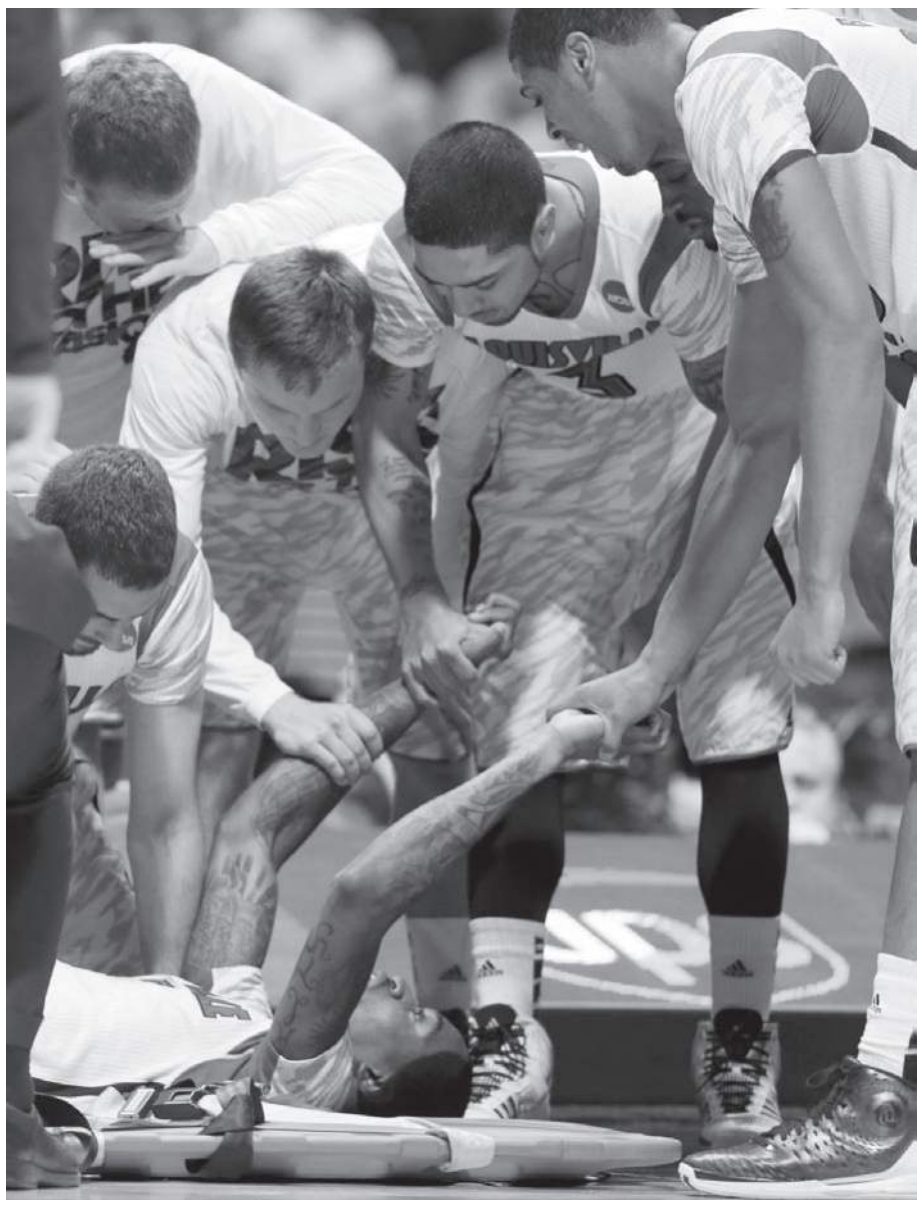
The Cardinals - who, like Syracuse, are moving to the Atlantic Coast Conference - were the only No. 1 seed to make it to the Final Four. And, boy, it's been an impressive run.

Louisville (33-5) has won its four NCAA games by an average margin of nearly 22 points, capped by a second-half blowout of Duke after the Cardinals shook off the incredible shock of Ware's injury with about 6 1/2 minutes to go before halftime.

"We won this for him," coach Rick Pitino said.

The sophomore snapped his lower right leg after coming down awkwardly while defending a 3-point shot. The injury occurred right in front of the Louisville bench, where the players gasped and turned away quickly at the sight of Ware's dangling leg, which was broken in two places.

Russ Smith collapsed onto the floor, along with several players, and was crying as doctors attended to Ware. While Ware was loaded onto a stretcher, the Cardinals gathered at midcourt until Pitino called them over, saying the injured player wanted to talk to them before he left.



AP

Louisville players talk to guard Kevin Ware after Ware's injury during the first half of the Midwest Regional final against Duke in the NCAA college basketball tournament, Sunday, March 31, 2013, in Indianapolis.

The sophomore, who played his high school ball in suburban Atlanta, urged his teammates to complete the trip to the Georgia Dome. Pitino wiped his eyes as Ware was wheeled out, as did several Louisville players.

"All he kept saying - and remember, the bone is 6 inches out of his leg - all he's yelling is, `Win the game! Win the game!'" Pitino said. "I've never seen that in my life. We're all distraught and all he's saying is, `Win the game.' Kevin is a special young man."

This is a special team. Smith scored 23 points. Gorgui Dieng had 14 points, 11 rebounds and four blocks.

The Cardinals simply refused to lose, breaking open a game that was tied at 42. They dove on the floor for loose balls. They pounded the boards ferociously. They contested every shot and swarmed around the Blue Devils like they had an extra player on the court.

In a sense, they did. During every timeout, Pitino reminded the players of their hospitalized teammate.

"This is a gritty bunch," the coach said. "From the beginning of the year to now, they've not had a bad game. I'm really proud of these guys."

While the Cardinals are the clear favorite heading to their second straight Final Four, Wichita State was the most improbable team to advance.

The ninth-seeded Shockers lived up to their nickname in the West, knocking off top-seeded Gonzaga in the second round and No. 2 seed Ohio State in the regional final Saturday night.

Wichita State (30-8) built a 20-point lead on the Buckeyes, then managed to hang on through a nerve-racking final five minutes to pull off the latest upset in a tournament filled with them.

The Shockers will need an even bigger stunner to knock off Louisville, the one team in a wide-open tournament that has looked unbeatable.

Then again, that other team from Kansas has shown no fear so far.

"It feels very good," said Cleanthony Early, a junior forward who, like most guys on this team, was passed over by higher-profile programs, "but we understand the fact that we've got to stay hungry and humble, because we've got two more games left to really be excited about."

Old-timers might remember Louisville and Wichita State as former conference rivals. The Cardinals were a member of the Missouri Valley Conference in the 1960s and `70s, which meant annual games against the Shockers.

Louisville holds a 19-5 edge in the series, but the teams haven't played since 1976.

Michigan (30-7) is headed back to the Final Four for the first time since the Fab Five era of the early 1990s, when the Wolverines lost in back-to-back national title games.

This team has much the same feel, led by sophomore Trey Burke, the Big Ten player of the year, and three freshmen starters. They were downright fabulous against Florida on Sunday, never seriously threatened after scoring the first 13 points.

"A lot of guys said we were really young and that we couldn't get here," said Burke, who scored 15 points against Florida but really came through in an improbable comeback against top-seeded Kansas in the regional semifinals. "We're here now and we still have unfinished business."

One of the freshmen, Nik Stauskas, hit all six of his 3-pointers and scored 22 points to lead the fourth-seeded Wolverines past the third-seeded Gators. Another of the youngsters, 6-foot-10 Mitch McGary, chipped in with 11 points and nine rebounds.

Florida became the first team to make it to three straight regional finals without winning any of them, according to STATS.

Bosh's late 3 lifts short-handed Heat past Spurs

SAN ANTONIO (AP) -- Often the forgotten member of Miami's "Big Three," Chris Bosh stepped up with LeBron James and Dwyane Wade sitting out to get the Heat a big win and move closer to securing home-court advantage throughout the NBA playoffs.

Bosh scored 23 points, including the winning 3-pointer with 1.9 seconds remaining, and the Heat beat San Antonio 88-86 on Sunday night with James, Wade and Mario Chalmers watching from the locker room as they sat out with injuries.

"We are the defending champs no matter who we put out there," Bosh said. "We are still the Miami Heat. We believe in ourselves. Each one of these guys is a professional. We played bigger roles in other cities but we came together and accepted lesser roles to win a championship here. We can still tap into that."

Ray Allen added 14 points, Norris Cole had 13 and Mike Miller 12 for Miami (58-15), which swept the season series with San Antonio (55-18). By earning the head-to-head tiebreaker with San Antonio, the Heat have a four-game cushion with nine remaining for the league's best record.

Miami beat San Antonio 105-100 on Nov. 29 when the Spurs opted to rest Tim Duncan, Tony Parker, Manu Ginobili and Danny Green.

All but Ginobili (strained right hamstring) played Sunday.

Duncan had 17 points and 12 rebounds and Kawhi Leonard added 17 points and 11 rebounds for the Spurs, who had a seven-game home winning streak snapped. Green and Parker added 12 points apiece and Stephen Jackson had 11.

Bosh finished 3 for 5 on 3s, including the final shot from straightaway in the closing seconds. He let out a loud yell after making the shot and celebrated with teammates when Parker's jumper bounced off the backboard as the buzzer sounded.

"He's a heck of a player, No. 1, but he's also a hell of a shooter," Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said. "He knocked down a big shot. Timmy contested it and he hit a big shot to win the game. Give him credit."

The game was similar to their first meeting this season, when the Spurs' reserves nearly toppled the Heat. This time the reserves prevailed, however.

"There's no question, it's a gratifying win," Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said. "To come in and play against a great team, an elite team. We talked about coming in with Miami Heat pride. It doesn't matter who's in uniform or not, all of our guys have proven that it's the pride of the name on the jersey, on the front of the jersey."

James and Wade were surprise late scratches while Chalmers did not play Friday in New Orleans and was listed as day-to-day with a sprained right ankle.

Knicks 108, Celtics 89

In New York, closing in on one goal of ending Boston's division title reign, the New York Knicks added another.

While they were finishing off their second victory over the Celtics this week, injured forward Rasheed Wallace drew a large "50" on the board in their locker room, challenging them to strive for a 50-win season.

They're on pace to get that, too, in what's shaping up as their best season in two decades.

Carmelo Anthony had 24 points and 10 rebounds, and the Knicks extended their winning streak to eight games and moved closer to ending Boston's hold on the Atlantic Division title with a 108-89 victory Sunday night.

Bulls 95, Pistons 95

In Chicago, Luol Deng scored 28 points, Jimmy Butler and Nate Robinson each added 16, and the Chicago Bulls beat Detroit 95-94 to extend their winning streak to 18 straight against the Pistons.

Rodney Stuckey scored 25 points and Greg Monroe added 18 points for the Pistons, who have not beaten Chicago since Dec. 23, 2008.

The Bulls rallied from a 13-point deficit to tie the score 78-all with 9:27 remaining on Butler's dunk after a steal. Robinson then fed Deng for a layup for an 80-78 lead, Chicago's first advantage since 1-0.

Hornets 112, Cavaliers 92

In New Orleans, Greivis Vasquez scored 25 points and Ryan Anderson added 23 to lead the New Orleans Hornets to a 112-92 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Sunday night.

Anthony Davis had 17 points and 10 rebounds, Brian Roberts scored 15 and Eric Gordon 14 for the Hornets, who snapped a two-game losing streak, including a blowout loss to Miami on Friday. Davis' double-double was his 17th, tops among NBA rookies.

Kryie Irving returned from a shoulder injury and led the Cavaliers with 31 points and six assists. Cleveland, which lost its eighth straight, was 1-7 in Irving's absence. Tristan Thompson, Wayne Ellington and Mareese Speights each scored 12 points for the Cavaliers and Shaun Livingston had 11.

Wizards 109, Raptors 92

In Washington, as the Wizards pursue their stated goal of finishing ninth in the Eastern Conference, seeing Bradley Beal back on the court was a welcome sight.

Beal scored 24 points in his return from a five-game absence, leading the Wizards to a 109-92 victory over the Toronto Raptors on Sunday night.

Emeka Okafor had 19 points and 10 rebounds, and John Wall added 18 points and 10 assists for Washington. The Wizards, who came in having lost two in a row on the road, won their seventh straight at home and moved into a tie with Toronto for 10th place in the Eastern Conference.

BRAVES

From Page 28

ers blew out the Rachel Q. Reyes Rays, 22-0, last Tuesday and the Junior Police Officer Program Enforcers shelled the IT&E Fielders, 16-2, in the Junior League last Wednesday.

TUESDAY
BIG LEAGUE
Braves 5, Enforcers 4

The Braves broke the ice with a run in the third inning, built from a pair of base knocks by Brandon and Peter Lieto. They added two more runs in the fourth inning, thanks to a defensive breakdown by the Enforcers' Greg Iskawa and Robert Tudela.

Braves ace pitcher Peter Lieto tallied 10 strikeouts, as he kept an egg on the board for the Enforcers during his 5 and 1/3 innings shift. Reliever Ricky Riungel was then tapped to close the sixth inning, after his crew pushed ahead, 4-0, in the bottom frame off an RBI- single by Jeremy Atalig that plated Lamarc Iguel.

However, upon Riungel's return in the seventh, the Enforcers erupted and tied the match at 4s off four hits, including a pair of RBI singles from Spencer Camacho and Jordan Taitano and a 2-RBI base smash from Ton Muna.

The Braves then opted to bring Peter Lieto back to the hump to work the eighth inning and he closed the side 1-2-3. Iguel then delivered the walk off single soon after, scoring Harry Blas, who led off the exchange with a walk.

Peter Lieto bagged the win and the save, and served up 6 and 1/3 scoreless innings, giving up four hits and a walk with 12 strikeouts.

Robert Tudela batted 3-for-3 with a run, though he was also caught in the base path twice.

WEDNESDAY
SENIOR DIVISION
Enforcers 5, Braves 4

The Enforcers managed a 2-1 lead in the first inning off three hits, including an RBI single by Darion Jones, who brought Fred Sangao home. The other run came off an error.

The Braves tied the game briefly at the top of the third inning off a fielder's choice by Ian Norita, before the Enforcers pressed ahead, 4-2, in the bottom side off an error and a sacrifice fly by Payton Lizama.

The Enforcers added the final run in the fourth inning off some costly errors and though the Braves mustered two runs in the sixth, the latter could not force extra innings in the final stand.

The Braves managed to load the bases in the sixth inning and scored off an RBI walk and a wild pitch, but the Enforcers hung tough and eventually nailed the tying run at the plate to get out of the jam. The Enforcers went on to squeeze the last three outs in the last inning of regulation.

Winning pitcher Oscar Stefano gave up three runs, two earned, off four hits, three walks, and three hit batsmen through five innings. He also batted 2-for-3.

Songao swung 1-for-2 with two runs. Alfonso Evangelista also batted 1-for-2 with a hit-by-pitch and a base on balls with three runs and two stolen bases.

SATURDAY
SENIOR DIVISION
Braves 5, Fielders 4

The Fielders scored all four of their runs in the very first inning off three hits, including a pair of RBI base smashes by Ian Rogolifoi and Cody Kaipat.

The Fielders received assistance from some early infield jitters by the Braves, as Davin Ada reached on a error and was later awarded access to the dish via a balk by the pitcher, while Kaipat managed to scamper home off a wild pitch.

The Braves had a chance to inflict some damage in the bottom portion, but only managed to bring in one run after loading the bases right away off a leadoff error, followed by three walks.

Braves pitcher Frankie Lieto settled down on the mound and went on to deal five scoreless innings to give his team a chance to rally back. The Braves moved around two runs in the third inning off a leadoff error and two hits and then tied the match at 4-all in the fourth off another leadoff error that boarded AJ Evangelista, who was later moved over to third base by his teammates before swiping the plate.

The Fielders bit down late in the game and forced the match into an extra inning, but came up empty in the top side, while the Braves ' Bradley Lieto cracked the walk-off single with one out to bring home Frankie Lieto.

The Fielders actually out hit the Braves 7 to 6, but the latter played a cleaner game on defense and came out on top. Moreover, three out of the four Braves batters that reached on errors led off the inning and all found their way home. IT&E also issued two more free passes to first base than its rival.

Rogolifoi batted 2-for-3 with an RBI and a run, while Kaipat went 2-for-2 with an RBI and a run.

Hunters 10, Ol'Aces 7

After both teams put up two runs on the board in the opening exchange, the Hunters trotted in front, 6-2, in the second inning off four hits, including an RBI single from KJ Deleon Guerrero and a 2-RBI base rip by Jonathan Cabrera. The other runs came off errors.

The Hunters then pulled away, 10-2, in the fourth inning of three hits, a couple of fielder's choices and some more errors. Brel Yobech bagged an RBI single in the mix that brought in Jhace Palacios, but was thrown out at second base trying to leg-out a double to abruptly end the side.

The Ol'Aces were stood up at third base three times before finally linking together some offense in the sixth inning. They reeled off a five-run rally off three hits including a 2-RBI single by Verlance Secharmidal and a 3-RBI in-the-park homer by Mike Muna, but the Hunters got out of dodge and fortunately ran into the bottom of the lineup in the final stand and secured the win, 1-2-3.

Hunters' Jerald Cabrera batted 2-for-3 for three runs and a base on balls. Palacios swung 2-for-3 for an RBI and a run and the Aces' Secharmidal went 3-for-4 for 3 RBIs and two runs.

Enforcers 11, Lions 10

The Enforcers staked 3-0 lead out of the gate with the help of a pair of leadoff walks that set up a RBI fielder's choice by Payton Lizama. Lizama was immediately tripled in by Darion Jones and the latter made it home off an error.

The Lions salvaged one run in the top of the second inning off a pair of hits by Brett Halstead and Kerry Camacho and then briefly pulled to within a run in the third off an RBI base poke by Catalina Dela Cruz, who scored Cedric Ada.

The Enforcers stretched the lead to 6-2 in the bottom half off three leadoff singles, followed by a pair of walks. Jones drove in Lizama, Oscar Stefano stole home, and Jeff Dela Cruz score off a wild pitch.

The Lions once again only responded with one run in the top of the fourth inning off an error, and the Enforcers doubled them up, 8-4, in the bottom side primarily off errors.

Kagman was then contained to a single run for the fourth time in the top of the fifth inning off a fielder's choice and the Enforcers trudged on, 11-4, off four hits, including a 2-RBI double by Franklin Lizama.

The Lions' Nathan Guerrero busted a leadoff double to start the sixth inning and scored off a wild pitch for another run and the pride mounted a nice comeback attempt in the last inning of the regulation, but fell one-run shy of forcing bonus frames.

Kagman mustered five runs in the seventh inning off a fielder's choice, four walks and a two-out, 3-RBI triple by Justin Santos. The two other runs were off an RBI walk and a wild pitch.

Winning pitcher Payton Lizama gave up three runs, one earned off seven hits, a walk, and a hit batsman through four innings.

The Enforcers' Dela Cruz batted 2-for-3 for two runs with a base on balls, while the Lions' Dela Cruz and Halstead both batted 2-for-3.

WSR

From Page 28

ra Kadokura, who timed in at 11.22 seconds. In the girls U8 60m, Agape's Ashley DeCourtney (10.88 second) and GTC's Mercedes Cruz (11.07) occupied the Top 2 spots in the Week 1 qualifiers. The Top 2 finishers in each zone (60m, 100m, 200m), will automatically qualify for the All Schools Championship, while the rest of the times from all zones will be compiled with the Top 2 getting the last two tickets.

In the U10 age group's 60m, WSR and GTC split top honors anew with Chris Oiterong recording the best time in the boys division with his 9.54 seconds and Sueann Huevos marking the fastest time in the girls at 9.68 seconds. Agape's Michael Guintu is at second place with his 9.59 seconds, while another GTC runner Barbara Peteru (10.15 seconds) made it to the Top 2 in the girls category.

In the U12 age group, the Kingfishers had a sweep with Jang Bunosek (8.53 seconds) and Andrew Romolor (8.91 seconds) earning a 1-2 finish for WSR and Rejella Rudolf (9.25 seconds) and Princess Alcantara (9.44 seconds) duplicating the feat.

In the 100m trials, DeCourtney logged her second field-best time in the U8 age group (19.83 seconds), while Praise Woo gave SCS its first top place after tallying 18.92 seconds in the boys division. Two GTC runners—Cruz (20.22 seconds) and Kadokura (19.13 seconds) joined the top placers.

It was GTC's turn to get a sweep with Peteru and Seiji Gonzales ruling the U10 100m trials with times of 17 seconds and 13.32 seconds, respectively. The Binadu had a 1-2 finish in the girls race with Huevos coming in next with her 17.36 seconds, while Oiterong (16.72 seconds) joined Gonzales in the Top 2.

In the U12 group, WSR reclaimed the Top 2 spots with Rudolf placing first with his 16.14 seconds, followed by schoolmate Benlerin Omopwi (16.68 seconds). In the boys division, SCS got its second first place finish with Jin Seok timing in at 15.72 second and beating the 16.23 seconds of WSR's Jung Bunosek.

In the 200m trials, an Agape student (complete name not provided on the results list) clocked in at 43.25 seconds, just .08 of a second ahead of Cruz in the girls U8. In the boys division, WSR's Lushaun Reyes made the fastest time at 40.32, while Woo recorded the second best mark at 40.64 seconds.

WSR nailed another first place finish in 200m with Oiterong logging 36.11 seconds and defeating teammate Martin Angui (36.54) in the U10 age group. In the girls division, GTC also had a 1-2 finish with Huevos and Peteru submitting 36.83 seconds and 38.36 seconds, respectively.

In the U12, WSR was still on top with Rudolf and Pernalyn Camacho logging 35.53 seconds and 37.79 seconds, respectively. In the boys division, SCS and WSR had a split with the former's Seok (31.97 seconds) downing the latter's Bunosek (34.31 seconds).

In the long jump, DeCourtney showed her versatility, recording 2.33m and beating six other U8 students. The Agape bet was the lone entry in her division to mark at least 2 meters in the long jump, as second place and schoolmate Elvira Zhang managed only 1.88m. In the boys division, Kadokura almost hit the 3-meter mark with his 2.90m. Fellow GTC student Elijah Mortensen came in at second with his 2.82m.

In the girls U10, Peteru remained a force with her field best 2.91m. WSR's Ruth Doca came in at second with her 2.47m. In the boys division, it was a close fight between Angui and Guintu, who logged 3.20m and 3.10m, respectively.

In the U12 division, WSR had a sweep both in the boys and girls divisions. Andrew Omelau submitted 3.50m to outclass teammate Shakobe Rangamar (3.47m), while Mikona Fernandez and Kiara Mereb clinched the Top 2 place after logging 3.20m and 3.15m, respectively.

Meanwhile, results in Zones B and C will be reported later this week, along with the junior high and high school qualifiers.

OVER

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details about the tournament were available and the entry list is expected to be posted after the April 23 deadline.

Next month's competition is a Grade 5 tournament under the Junior ITF Circuit. The event is an introduction to the circuit and awards 30 ranking points to the champion, 20 to runner-up, 15 to the semifinalists, 10 to the quarterfinalists, and 5 to the losers in the Round of 16.

The IT&E Northern Marianas Open Junior Championships is one of the five Junior ITF events that will take place simultaneously from May 20 to 26. Other competitions will be held in Italy (Grade A) and Sweden, Hungary, and Montenegro, which will all host Grade 4 events.

The CNMI, through NMITA, earned the right to host a Junior ITF event for the first time during a bidding in September last year in New York at the US Open.

GRASSROOTS

From Page 28

emony, introduction and group picture as well as a general overview and history of the FIVB. The structure of the FIVB World Tour and calendars; the role of coaches (ethics, responsibilities and expectations); the designing and cycling of athlete performance calendars; equipment; structuring of training sessions; warm up, cool down, rest and recovery exercises; and athlete coordination (pairing athletes/playing combinations) will also be discussed in tomorrow's session.

Thursday's session is still at MHS and will also take place from 4pm to 9pm. Day 2 will go over running and preparing a tournament; officials and national federation; technical skills; game skills (attacking systems/defensive systems); theory rules of the game and officiating; tactical systems; and scouting oppositions.

Fiesta's sand courts will host the Friday session from 4pm to 6pm and participants will have a practical review of the classroom materials on the beach, followed by the physical preparation at the MHS weightroom from 6pm to 9pm.

Saturday's session will be from 8am to 5pm and will also be held at Fiesta with participants putting their training and coaching skills to work on the beach. Then the course concludes on Sunday from 8am to 5pm, still at Fiesta with a mini-tournament or exhibition match with a practical assessment.

An updated course outline and schedule will be available soon at www.nmivolleyball.org.

For more information or to make a reservation email training.programs@nmivolleyball.org or nmivolleyball@gmail.com.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-New York	46	26	.639	–
x-Brooklyn	42	31	.575	4½
Boston	38	35	.521	8½
Philadelphia	30	43	.411	16½
Toronto	27	46	.370	19½

Southeast Division

z-Miami	58	15	.795	–
x-Atlanta	41	33	.554	17½
Washington	27	46	.370	31
Orlando	19	55	.257	39½
Charlotte	17	56	.233	41

Central Division

x-Indiana	47	27	.635	–
x-Chicago	40	32	.556	6
Milwaukee	35	37	.486	11
Detroit	24	50	.324	23
Cleveland	22	50	.306	24

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

x-San Antonio	55	18	.753	–
x-Memphis	49	24	.671	6
Houston	40	33	.548	15
Dallas	36	37	.493	19
New Orleans	26	48	.351	29½

Northwest Division

x-Oklahoma City	54	20	.730	–
x-Denver	50	24	.676	4
Utah	38	36	.514	16
Portland	33	40	.452	20½
Minnesota	26	46	.361	27

Pacific Division

x-L.A. Clippers	49	25	.662	–
Golden State	42	32	.568	7
L.A. Lakers	38	36	.514	11
Sacramento	27	47	.365	22
Phoenix	23	51	.311	26

x-clinched playoff spot
z-clinched conference

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DLX/Anchor Strong Basketball League Winners

PHOTOS BY ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Players of Adobo pose with their trophies and league organizers after ruling Division B of the 2013 DLX/Anchor Strong Invitational late last month at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

From left, Mythical Team members Elgene Mangali, Leo Galarse and Sheen Metran, Rocyl Ritual, third right, and Darwin Barbo, second right, pose with league organizers during the awards ceremony for Division A.

SSFM players show their Division A championship trophies and pose with league organizers.

Gualo Rai's Rico Morales, seventh from left, receives their runner-up trophy.

Division B Finals MVP Shane Deleon Guerrero, right, receives his award from DLX's Melbert Dela Rama.

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Astros strong in AL debut, top Rangers
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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Final Four is set after blowouts, surprises
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Braves, 4 others notch tough wins

DARE Program Enforcers' Jose Lizama Jr. rifles home a pitch during their game against Rep. Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero's Kagman Lions in the Senior League last week at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Field.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

A handful of hard fought matches were played in the Saipan Little League Baseball last week.

In the Big League last Tuesday, the Natibu Sports Association Braves survived the LEEP Program Enforcers, 5-4, in eight innings at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Field. In the Senior League, DARE Program Enforcers defeated the NSA Braves, 5-4, last Wednesday, while Saturday's Senior triple-feature resulted in the Braves outlasting the IT&E Fielders, 5-4, after eight innings, the Hunters defeating the Docomo Pacific Ol'Aces, 10-7, and the Enforcers narrowly evading Rep. Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero's Kagman Lions, 11-10.

In other results in the Big League, IT&E Field-

See BRAVES on Page 26

Grassroots beach v'ball clinic set

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association in conjunction with the Federation International De Volleyball (FIVB) is holding a VCP Grassroots Beach Volleyball Clinic at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan and Marianas High School Gymnasium from April 3 to 7.

The course is free and open to the public. It provides insight into the world of beach volleyball and teaches fundamental issues, such as how to create and organize competitions. In addition to defining necessary beach volleyball structure, the course also covers the latest rules and regulations in the sport.

The course aims to improve the knowledge and competence of beach volleyball players, referees and promoters; present the most recent trends in the sport; and motivate and stimulate national federations to develop national courses and an internal method of training.

Tomorrow's clinic will be held at the MHS Gymnasium from 4pm to 9pm and Day 1 activities include the opening cer-

See GRASSROOTS on Page 26

WSR rules Zone A qualifiers

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

William S. Reyes Elementary School is showing its force early, topping almost half of qualifying events in the 2013 PSS/McDonald's All Schools Championships held at the Oleai Sports Complex.

In the 24 events scheduled in Week 1 (March 18) for Zone A, the Kingfishers posted the best marks in 11, besting SCS, Dandan Elementary School, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School, and Agape.

Justine Aldan clocked in at 11.14 seconds in the boys U8 60m sprint, defeating 21 other runners, including GTC's Aki-

See WSR on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Spectators watch a student compete in the long jump event in Week 1 of the 2013 PSS/McDonald's All Schools Championships' qualifying tournament late last month at the Oleai Sports Complex.

Over 60 sign up for CNMI-hosted Junior ITF event

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's first-ever Junior ITF event dubbed as the "IT&E Northern Marianas Open Junior Championships" has been receiving a lot of entries since registration has started last month.

Tournament director and Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association president Jeff Race said in a brief telephone interview with Saipan Tribune yesterday said so far 45 have signed up for the boys competition, while the girls category has lured more than 20.

The IT&E Northern Marianas Open Junior Championships will be played in two phases with the first one set for qualifying draws for both boys and girls singles (U18 players). The qualifying tournament will have a 16-player draw (each for boys and girls) and will run from May 20 to 21 at the Pacific Islands Club hard court.

Then for the main draw, each division will have a 32-player draw and games will be played from May 22 to 26. A doubles competition will also take place from May 23 to 26 and will have a 16-player draw (for boys and girls).

The CNMI-hosted Junior ITF event will feature players from Oceania Tennis Federation-member nations, along with representatives from Asia and the U.S. mainland. In previous interviews, Race said they are expecting to draw 60 to 70 players in the tournament.

The IT&E Northern Marianas Open Junior Championships has been included in the calendar of events at the Junior ITF website, but only the

See OVER on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Thea Minor is seen here in action during a tournament last year at the Pacific Islands Club, which will be the venue of next month's IT&E Northern Marianas Open Junior Championships.